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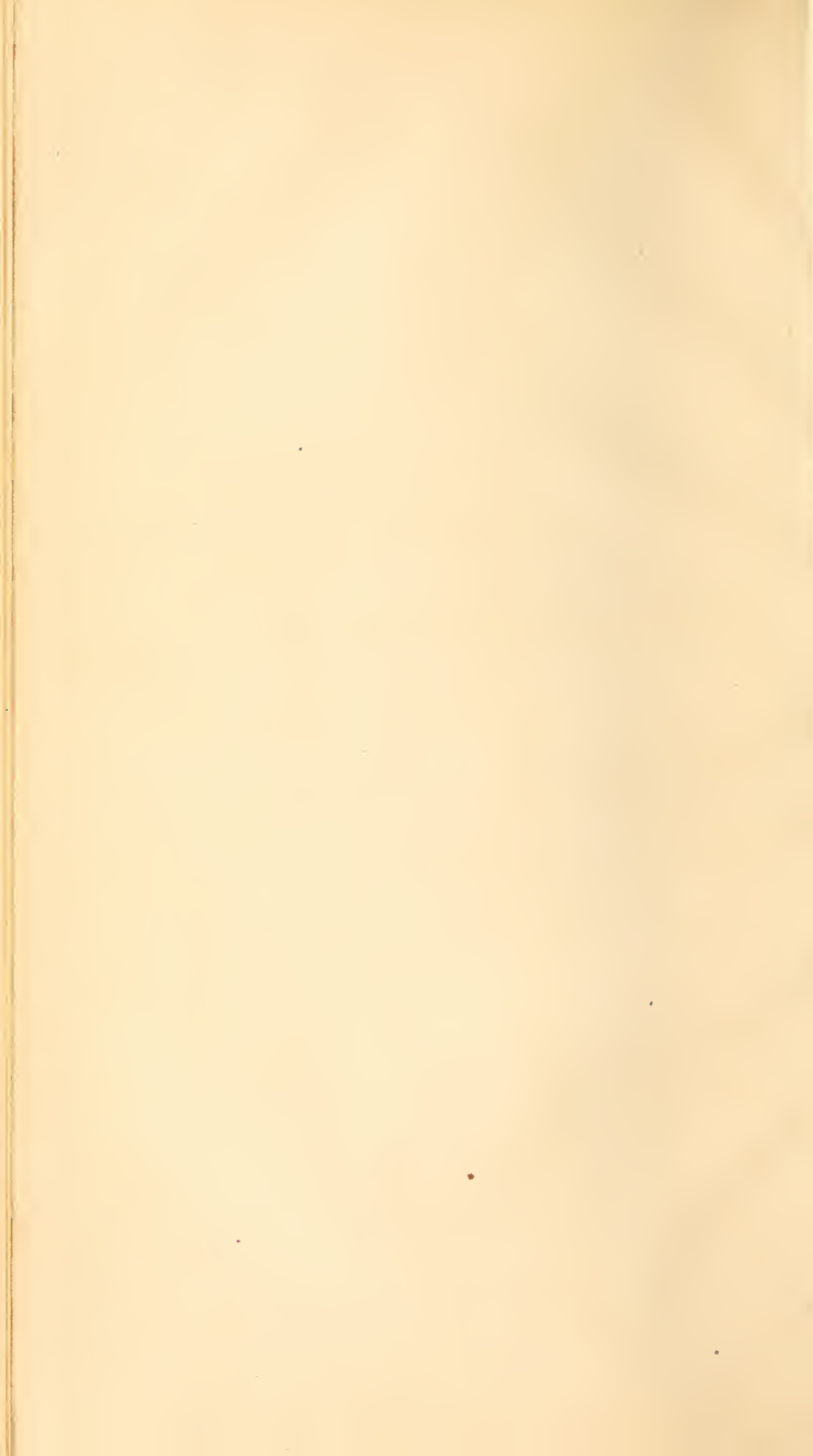
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*New Sam. L. Reply
With the kind regards
of your friend
Humble Servant
S. A.*

REVIEW
OF
MR. WHITMAN'S DISCOURSE
ON
DENYING THE LORD JESUS.



Powder, Smooth

A

REVIEW

OF

REV. MR. WHITMAN'S DISCOURSE,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

SECOND RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

IN WALTHAM.



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REVIEW.

A Discourse on Denying the Lord Jesus, by BERNARD WHITMAN, of Waltham, from Matthew, x. 33, published by the request of the Second Religious Society in Waltham. pp. 47.

“It is,” says an able writer, “the result either of imperfection in the reasoning powers, or of ignorance concerning the main subject in dispute, or of design and artifice in the controversialist, that subjects on which there is no debate are often gravely proved or asserted, or that the very point which is the grand source of contention is constantly assumed.” Such, I am sorry to say, is a grand fault which pervades the sermon under review. But where important truth is concerned, and remembering that we are required “to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints,” delicacy of feeling should not prevent our exposing sophistry and false assertions, though such exposure have an unfavorable bearing upon the reasoning powers, or motives of a controversialist. Even this exposure, however, should be made in the spirit of love. “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in *meekness* instructing those that oppose themselves.” Nothing but a conviction that truth is important, and that this sermon contains fatal—soul destroying errors,—a conviction strengthened and confirmed by a repeated perusal and careful comparison with the Scriptures, would have induced us to undertake this review. All reproachful epithets and groundless assertions will be avoided, for it is truth only, with which we are concerned. We are aware, however, that we are entering upon dangerous ground, for in the sermon, there are many expressions highly fitted to irritate and call forth feelings, opposite to those which, as professing Christians, we are bound, and ever desire to exercise. But we hope to be restrained from imbibing the same spirit. If we are pronounced so weak that we cannot be “*answerable for our opinions*,” ‘because we dissent from his conclusions,’—if we are called “*senseless*,” ‘because we worship a Saviour who was slain,’—and are held up as objects which make

him “*unspeakably ashamed*,” because we do not agree with him in renouncing as spurious, some disputed passages of the sacred text, we will yet refrain from using such reproachful language ; for it is, *to say the least*, repugnant to the legitimate ends of controversy—but poorly fitted to elicit truth, or excite the feelings of christian forbearance and kindness. But if a person neither professes nor manifests any regard to the rights and feelings of those who differ from him, he must not complain if we expose and disapprove his conduct. A late Unitarian writer says, “We can neither reconcile it to justice nor reason, nor to christian benevolence, forbearance or humility, that those who disbelieve the doctrine of the supreme divinity of Christ are to be excluded from the name and hope of Christians. We know that we have no right to pronounce the judgments of God, and that a mere difference of opinion should make no difference in our feelings toward one another.” This has long been the language of Unitarians, and they have often been complained of, for talking so *much* about charity, and for manifesting so *little*. But we have no complaint of this kind to make of anything we find in this sermon. The author is consistent throughout with himself. He makes no professions of charity, and he manifests none. He denounces all who believe in the supreme divinity of Christ, and who pay him divine honors, as either “ignorant and senseless,” or as deniers of the Lord Jesus, and consequently carrying out the sentiment of his text, pronounces the judgment of Christ upon them, and excludes them from the name and the hopes of the Christian.

And though the consequences of his positions and conclusions are so solemn in their bearings upon all those who differ from him, and according to his views, “*deny the Lord Jesus*,” yet we have seldom met with a sermon which is so *positive*. If he had been an aged divine, and were writing upon a plain and undisputed subject, we should not have expected more unbounded confidence in his own assertions and conclusions. We could not but feel a little surprised at this, especially as the substance of all his arguments had been so repeatedly before the public, and as often answered by men of distinguished intellect and reputation. He seems, however, to suppose that *his* arguments are so forcible, and above all exception, that they cannot be overthrown. For he asks, after having summed up his conclusions, “Now is there any possible way in which you can overthrow these conclusions?” And answers, “You will attempt the work in but one manner,” and then adds, that for the support of this only manner in which you can overthrow these my conclusions, there is “*not a word, not even a hint* in the whole Bible.” Now we shall not answer this by an opposite assertion, and say that the Scriptures are full of proofs against his conclusions, for our readers have the Bible in their hands, and we are willing to leave them to weigh the argu-

ments we shall adduce, and to judge for themselves, whether there is anything in the Bible to overthrow *his* conclusions, or to support *our own*. We are perhaps the more averse to confident assertions, from a remembrance of an old remark, that "the extreme confidence of assertions is often in the inverse ratio of the strength of the argument."

If by a fair examination of the sermon, his proofs should be found to rest upon precarious assumptions, misconstrued and misapplied passages—if in some cases his conclusions should be defeated by his own arguments, and especially if it should appear that he has not supported his conclusions against arguments and objections which are before the public yet unanswered, it may appear strange, to some at least, that he should, so early, appear before the public with such *extreme* confidence.

The sermon is founded on Matt. x. 33. *Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*

This text is truly a solemn one. It contains a caution, accompanied with a sanction. It is the declaration of a truth, viz.: that those who deny Christ *here* will be denied by Christ *hereafter*. It is the plain and unequivocal declaration of the Saviour that, *whosoever* (every one who) shall deny him before men, him will he deny before his Father in heaven. If then, it can be shown who the deniers of Christ here alluded to are, it follows inevitably, that they will (continuing the same) be denied by Christ in another world. And everything said from this text, by way of showing who denies Christ, is utterly irrelative, unless we admit the consequence that the same will be denied by Christ. It was very natural, in order that the text might be made practical, to show in the first place *how*, or in *what ways*, we may deny Christ, and then each individual could make the application, and if guilty, feel his danger of being denied by Christ at the judgment. And in his introduction, Mr. Whitman very justly says, "You may deny the Lord Jesus in two different ways, either in word or in deed. If you contradict his declarations you deny him in word. If you disobey his commands you deny him in deed." He then notices three instances of denying Christ, two of the *first* kind,—denying him in word, and one of the *last*,—denying him in deed. The

1. Was making him God.
2. Was making him equal with God.
3. Was worshipping him as God.

Under the second kind of denying the Lord Jesus, (in deed,) we expected to hear something said about a practical disregard of his institutions, and a flagrant transgression of his laws, for he had said, if you disobey his commands you deny him in deed; but the only way of denying him in deed which he instances is, that of *worshipping him as God*. It has heretofore been customary for

Unitarians to speak of opinions as harmless, or non-essential, and to represent *unholy living*, or disobedience to the moral precepts of Christ, as the only thing which would expose any one to his final displeasure. But Mr. W. in showing who denied Christ, and of consequence, carrying out the sentiment of his text, who would finally be denied by Christ, wholly omits all disobedience to the precepts of Christ, and so far as we can learn from the sermon, places all the guilt of denial, in wrong views of Christ's character, and in worshipping him under the influence of those views ! However immoral and wicked in conduct, nothing is said to show that such deny Christ. As though the precepts and commands of Christ related to nothing else, only one way is mentioned in which he may be denied *practically*, and that is, by *worshipping him as God !* Nobody is included in his description of the deniers of the Lord Jesus, but Trinitarians, as such, without any regard to their moral character ! Perhaps Mr. W. will say that his limits in a single sermon would admit of noticing *only* some of the ways in which Christ is denied. But when considering his limits, in making his plan, from the numerous ways in which Christ might be denied *practically*, he would of course take those which were the most prominent, and dangerous, and omit those of less moment. Unless a man had a party object in view, common sense would dictate this course. In the second way of denying Christ, he might have noticed many instances which, without any change of the translation, or unnatural construction, would have been sufficiently obvious to all, as plain cases of denying the Lord Jesus. He might have noticed Judas, the crucifiers of Christ, those who contrary to all his moral precepts live ungodly lives, and especially the case of false teachers, as particularly mentioned in 2 Peter, ii. 1, and in Jude, iv. but in making his selection, he takes only one case, and that of the beloved disciple John.

By the small mistake of changing the angel for Jesus, he makes John guilty of worshipping Christ contrary to his command, and consequently of denying him. This we shall notice hereafter. We mention it now, only to show what a singular selection he made. In showing who those were that *practically* denied Christ, and from a text too, which assured him that whosoever denied Christ *here*, should be denied by Christ *in heaven*, he takes *John*, and after perverting the Scripture, as we shall show hereafter, in order to make it answer his purpose, he considers him as a denier of Christ, while he omits the mention of Judas, Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the band of soldiers, false teachers, the profane, the immoral, and ungodly sinners of all descriptions. Mr. Whitman then obviously considers worshipping Christ as among the highest degrees of wickedness, as the most prominent way (for it is the only one he notices) of denying Christ in deed. And on his own principles, we will not say he is inconsistent. For if Christ be only a

man, it is gross idolatry to worship him; and no idolator shall enter the kingdom of heaven.

But perhaps Mr. W. will say all his fears were on the supposition of *ignorance*, for he said in the beginning of his sermon, "No sincere Christian would knowingly deny the Lord Jesus," and at the close he says, "if your guilt be unintentional, pardon will be granted." It seems, then, if we bring the beginning and close of the sermon together, it resolves itself into this,—As worshipping Christ is the most prominent way of denying him, no sincere Christian will be guilty of *knowingly* worshipping him. He will never be guilty of *knowingly* making him God, or equal with God, or of worshipping him as God. If he does it, it must be unawares—not *knowing* it. But if a sincere Christian happen to fall into it unawares, or in his own words, "if your guilt be unintentional, pardon will be granted." But what need of pardon? There is no guilt in an *unintentional* act. A person, in our view of ethicks, is no more guilty for an act done without his knowledge and intention, than he is for the involuntary contraction of a nerve. Why then this long sermon? Why should the author say, "I am compelled to fear we are in great danger of unintentionally denying the Lord Jesus?" Did he not know there was no sin in that which was unintentional, or as he himself says, 'it will be pardoned'?

Why then should he say, "Knowing my accountableness to my heavenly Father, and solemnly impressed with the worth of immortal souls, I have selected this infinitely important subject for our present consideration"?

We must detain the reader one moment longer on this point. No sincere Christian, he says, will deny Christ, except it be ignorantly, and all who do it in this way will be pardoned. Now the text which he is explaining and enforcing is, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven." From this text, he, in the first place, expresses his solemn fears that some may deny Christ *ignorantly*, and gives this as the reason of his writing, and then at the close tells us that all who deny him unintentionally will be pardoned.

"*Whosoever shall deny me before men.*" Who are they? Those who ignorantly make him God, or equal with God, or worship him as God, and all these, because they do it ignorantly, will be pardoned. The text then should read thus. Whosoever shall deny me before men shall be pardoned.

There is one other construction which the language of the sermon will bear, that is, to consider those who deny Christ as doing it *intentionally*, and thus exclude them from being sincere Christians. And from some other expressions in the sermon, we should judge this is the ground the author designs to take.

"No *sincere Christian* on earth would *knowingly* deny the

Lord Jesus." After saying in the closing paragraph of his sermon that "if your guilt be *unintentional*, pardon will be granted," he adds, "but if caused by *neglect or wilfulness*, deplorable must be your condition." It seems from the contrast of the two parts of the sentence, that by *neglect or wilfulness* the writer means, intentionally or designedly, in opposition to *unintentionally*. He has made *unintentional* an emphatic word, on the ground of which pardon will be granted, of course its opposite, *intentional*, would express his meaning in the other and opposite clause. From this sentence, taken in connexion with the rest of the sermon, it appears to be the author's opinion that all who *intentionally* make Christ God, or equal with God, or worship him as God, "are in a deplorable situation," for they knowingly deny Christ, and consequently are not sincere Christians. In this shape the text may stand as it is, and the last half may be applied,—they will Christ deny before his Father in heaven. And the *fact* is, that those against whom the sermon seems designed to bear, do not, do what he calls denying Christ, *ignorantly*. They *know* that they make him God, and they *design* to worship him as God. They are then denied both *the name and the hopes of sincere Christians*. But we would not say that the author means this. There is, indeed, such looseness in his style of writing, particularly in the use of single words, that we are at a loss to know which ground of the two, he means to stand upon—whether he means to consider all Trinitarians, in all *past*, and at the *present* time, (for according to him they have all denied Christ,) so "*ignorant and senseless*" as that they have not known what they were about, and may, therefore, be considered sincere Christians who will be pardoned on the ground of their sins being *unintentional*; or whether he means to denounce them all as wicked idolators, and not worthy the Christian name, and as exposed to the final denunciation of the Judge of the world. We should presume, from some other expressions in the sermon, that the latter was his opinion. For it is only on this ground, that we can see any force in his reason for selecting this subject, viz. 'his solemn impression of the worth of immortal souls.' If denying Christ endangers the soul, and he sincerely believes that "making Christ God, or worshipping him as God," is denying him, then he believes that Trinitarians are in danger of losing their souls, and his reason for writing is forcible. It is only on this ground, that he can apply the last clause of his text. And moreover he has said, on page 36, "If you worship Jesus as God, you disobey the first great command, and have another God besides your heavenly Father."

But it is immaterial with us which of the two grounds he takes, whether he considers us as a "senseless" stupid race of creatures, or whether he excludes from us the name and the hope of the sincere Christian. If he take the former, we shall not dispute his

ground for a moment, if the latter, we rejoice that we stand amenable to a higher tribunal.

Having taken this general view of this sermon, which assumes such high ground, I shall now proceed to consider the arguments by which the author arrives at his conclusions.

Before entering upon this part of the examination, I would remark that the Bible is our standard, and that this must be received as it stands, and interpreted according to the common laws of language, without violating the obvious principles of grammatical interpretation for the sake of favoring any party views. Our simple inquiry is, what sentiment does the language of this or that passage convey, without violence or perversion. In the words of a distinguished biblical critic, "If I put a gloss upon any passage which represents it as conveying a meaning different from that which the laws of interpretation would assign it; I may deceive others, or I may serve the interests of a party, but I violate the reason which God has given me by such conduct, and act a part dishonest, and unworthy of an inquirer after truth."

In discussing religious subjects it should never be forgotten, that we are not contending for victory, but are inquiring for *eternal truth*, in which *all* are alike concerned. Such discussions, therefore, should be manly and respectful. Then, the doctrines of true religion have nothing to fear, for candid investigation, will only evince more clearly their truth, their excellence, and their unrivalled tendency, to promote the holiness and happiness of men. To say, that those who dissent from us are "ignorant and senseless," is an unworthy artifice, in which the public have no concern, and which, if it does not betray the weakness of a cause, always, and justly, degrades him who in this way enters upon its defence.

Whether the sermon before us bears internal marks of zeal to serve a party, such as an attorney would manifest in pleading the cause of his client; or a humble, impartial love for truth, such as a trembling conscientious Christian, who feels that if he *adds to*, or *takes from*, the sacred word, his own name will be taken from the Lamb's book of life, would exercise, we shall leave for the candid to judge.

Our limits will not permit us to go through particularly the whole sermon, for to bring all the proofs from Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles, which, in our estimation, go to show the fallacy of his assumptions and expositions, would require a large volume instead of a small pamphlet. The examination of a part however, will involve principles, the application of which will be easy to the whole.

Mr W.'s first kind of den~~ying~~ing the Lord Jesus is in *word*. The first example he selects is that of the Jews accusing Jesus of "*making himself God*." "In ~~so~~ doing," he says, "they contra-

dicted his declarations, and consequently denied the Lord Jesus." The instance referred to is John, x. 23—37. Some able writers have supposed that Christ here in repelling the force of their accusations could not be considered as either renouncing or asserting his proper divinity, but as defending his claims to the son-ship.* We are inclined to adopt this opinion. But if we suppose he intends to do *either*, we must suppose he intends to *assert* his real divinity, and not as Mr. W. supposes to *deny* it. Mr. W. in his quotation left out the following verse, "but if I do, (the works of my Father,) though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe, that the *Father is in me and I in him.*" This essentially alters the case. On this and the verse preceding, Dr. Adam Clarke has the following comment. "I desire you to believe only on the evidence of my works. If I do not do such works as God only can perform, then believe me not. Though ye do not now credit what I have said to you, yet consider my works, and then ye will see, that these works prove that I am in the Father and the Father in me, and consequently that I and the Father are one. This seems to be the force of our Lord's argument; and every one must see and feel that it is conclusive." Now was it not natural for the Jews, if they understood his claim of sonship to be a claim of equality with his Father, to understand him as meaning to confirm this claim. Jesus seems to use the *argumentum ad hominem*, and represents it as surprising that they who know that in their Scriptures even men were called gods, should complain, when he, who was justly entitled to this appellation according to all the predictions concerning him, should call himself the *Son of God*.† As they would not believe his words, he appeals to their senses, and says, "If I do not the works of my Father believe me not, but *if I do*, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me and I in him," as much as to say, I do not wish you to believe on my bare assertion, but I will give a visible proof of my *divine power*, that you may no longer have reason to doubt, but that ye may KNOW AND BELIEVE, *that the Father is in me and I in him.*" Does not this look like making his claims good against their accusations of blasphemy? Does it not look like making his title good to all that he had claimed?

Should we place ourselves in their circumstances, could we understand him otherwise, than as meaning to confirm his former assertion that, "he and his Father are one." The Jews did understand him so, and therefore sought again to take him. Now is it not strange, on the supposition of Mr. W. that he intended explicitly to deny their charge, that he did not do it in plain language, es-

* See Stuart's Letters, pp. 145—148, 2d Edition. See Stuart's Letters to Dr. Miller, pp. 146—149. 8vo.

† See Ps. ii. 7, 12. Isa. ix. 6. vii. 14. Compared with John, i. 1, 2, 14. Rom. ix. 5. Phil. ii. 6—8, &c.

pecially, is it not strange, that he used language the *natural*, if not *necessary* construction of which, would confirm their impressions? And is it not, if possible, more strange, that when he saw their impressions had been confirmed, he should not have contradicted it, in terms so explicit, as effectually to remove it from their minds? On this occasion to which Mr. W. appeals with so much confidence, whatever explanation we may give to the language of his answer to their charge, the *fact* is clear, that it was language which did not remove the impression made by his *former* language, that he meant to make himself God. And we take the *fact alone*, that his answer did not remove, but confirmed their impression that he meant to make himself one with God. And can we suppose, that if they were mistaken, he would not have corrected them in unambiguous and undeniable terms?

Am I conversing with a captious enemy, should I not be careful to use language which would not be misunderstood, and if misunderstood, and the consequence of this misunderstanding should confirm him in a dangerous error, should I not immediately explain myself, and remove the false impression? What then shall we think of Christ, if, as Mr. W. supposes, he intended to deny their charge? Why did he do it in language which naturally tended to strengthen their impressions? And *especially* when he saw that he had only confirmed them, why did he not either explain his words, or affirm *plainly* that they misunderstood him? But no, in this and in numerous other similar cases, he never undeceived them, but left them to stone him and crucify him for blasphemy, *making himself equal with God*. Well has it been asked, "if Christ is a mere creature, would he not have hastened to disclaim the imputation, in language of which the meaning could not be mistaken, and would he not have sedulously shunned every form of speech, and every mode of conduct, that could possibly countenance a supposition so inexpressibly shocking to his mind?"*

The next heads of the sermon are as follows,

"2. If you say that Jesus is God, you contradict the declarations of Moses and the Prophets.

3. If you say Jesus is God, you contradict his own declarations.

4. If you say that Jesus is God, you contradict the declarations of the apostles.

5. If you say that Jesus is God, you contradict all the remarkable facts of his history."

We class these heads together for the sake of brevity, as the nature of the argument is the same under each. Through all of them, the sophism is what logicians call, "*Petitio principii*," a supposition or assumption of what is not granted." It assumes that Jesus being anointed, or sent by God, or called the son of God, is clear proof that he is not God. And *assuming* this, he has only to collect those passages which relate to his human or official character, and they are so many proofs against his divinity. They are indeed

* See Wardlaw's Reply to Yates, p. 130.

proofs of his humanity, yea of his *official inferiority*, which nobody questions, but they leave the main question, touching his equal attributes, just where they found it. He can indeed produce his hundred passages in which Christ is declared inferior to the Father, or as sent by the Father, or as being son of the Father, and if they were multiplied to thousands they would prove nothing in point, for on the Trinitarian hypothesis, these all are consistent with the hundreds of other passages which call him God, and clothe him with divine attributes and honors. 'But Mr. W. does not seem to think it incumbent on him to meet fairly the main question, but argues on, with all confidence in the credulity of his readers, leaving those who are unacquainted with the controversy to wonder what Trinitarians make of these passages, or whether they have not overlooked them altogether.' But as we shall soon come to another chain of subdivisions, through the whole of which there is merely a repetition of the same argument, viz. "he is son of God and therefore cannot be equal with God, the *conclusion* being a *bare assumption*, not an *inference* from the premises, I shall, for the present, leave this, and pass on. Mr. W. says,

"Perhaps you will tell me, that the titles, attributes, offices, works and words of Jesus seem to imply that he is God. Let us now attend to these particulars."

Under the first of these particulars, he notices several passages in which he says, "the name of God seems, at first view, to be applied to Jesus." Under this remark he notices the first of John. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."

"At first sight, you might think the *word* meant the *son*. But you will be convinced that this is impossible, if you will put *son* in the place of *word*, and *Father* or *Father* and *holy spirit*, in the room of *God*. In the first instance, it will read—In the beginning was the *son*, and the *son* was with the *Father*, and the *son was the Father*. To say the *son was the Father*, is false and absurd. Try the other method. In the beginning was the son, and the son was with the Father and holy spirit, and the *son was the Father and holy spirit*. This is still worse. To say the *son was the Father and the holy spirit*, is not only false and absurd, but nonsensical. You must therefore conclude the *word* cannot mean the *son* in any sense."

This is indeed *nonsensical*. But to whom is it to be ascribed? We shall leave the reader to judge with how much reason Mr. W. gave this paragraph such an air of self-complacency and triumph. To us it appears that the nonsense has arisen from a loose and indefinite use of words. He uses the word *Father* instead of *God*, without bearing in mind that when the word *Father* is used in relation to the Trinity, or as the first person, it does not mean exactly the same as when used to express the supreme Being. We sometimes call God *our Father*,—*the Father of all*, meaning the parent of the universe, or the supreme God. We also speak of the Father, as the Father of the Son Christ Jesus. Though we do not derogate from the divinity of the Father, yet it is readily perceived that the term is not so extensive in this *latter*, as in the

former sense. It should be considered that the term God is not always synonymous with Father. "It is sometimes used to denote the Godhead generally, without any particular reference to the distinction of persons;" and sometimes it means God as Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.* Trinitarians do not suppose that the words Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are synonymous and convertible terms, but so far from this that the doctrine of the Trinity supposes a distinction. Nor does the doctrine suppose that either the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, is the supreme God separate from the other two. But the doctrine is, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, although personally distinct, are in essence *one*. Each of them is God, because possessed of the attributes and perfections of the Godhead, but each of them is not God *separately* and exclusively of the other. Does Mr. W. here say, that neither of them *alone* then can be called God. The answer is, that neither of them is alone. While we maintain the above distinction of persons, we also believe there is a sense in which, they are not, and cannot be separate. *They are one*. And if there be a sense in which they are one, then there is a sense in which, what is true of them united, is true of each. They are, in union, the supreme God. Each of them, therefore, being in essence one with the others, is truly divine.† Many passages can be explained only on the ground of this distinction, and yet this union.‡

In many cases the term God, does mean, God as Father, in many other cases, it is a description of divine being—of the divinity without reference to the distinction of Father. The most charitable conclusion is, that Mr. W.'s loose and indefinite use of words led him to all this confusion. "At first sight," he says, "you might think the *word* (Logos) meant *Son*." But we do not suppose that the *Logos* meant Son, but it meant that which *became* Son. "The *word* was made flesh." Luke i. 35. From what has now been said, it will be readily seen that Mr. Whitman's argument here is without foundation. The terms are not convertible terms, and therefore his *reductio ad absurdum* is itself the absurdity. All that it proves is, that the Son is not the Father; and as though he supposed some one would doubt this, and as though he would demonstrate, that his not being the Father is proof that he cannot be divine, thus assuming again the main thing in dispute, he brings in his favorite argument, which seems through the sermon to be the amount of all his resources; viz.

"Jesus is the Christ the son of God. If he is the Christ or anointed, he can be no part of that God by whom he was anointed, and if he was the son of God, he could not be the God and Father on whom he was dependent for existence."

Mr. W. next gives his definition of the *word*. (Logos.) "It means," says he, "the power of God considered as in action." As he has now given a definite meaning to *the word*, it will be fair

* See Christian Magazine, vol. 3, p. 267. † Ibid. p. 258. ‡ See John xiv. 8—11.

to test it, by placing it instead of *the word*, and then it will read thus. In the beginning was the power of God considered as in action, and the power of God considered as in action was with God, and the power of God considered as in action was God. The same (power of God considered as in action) was in the beginning with God. All things were made by *him*, (the power of God considered as in action.) In him was life, &c. And "the power of God considered as in action" was made flesh, and dwelt among us, &c. We have taken his own definition, and therefore have treated him fairly. And whether it be "absurd" or "nonsensical," the reader will judge. To what class of men can you suppose that John would seriously say, that the power of God considered as in action, was with God. "What would be said of a man who should gravely assert that the power of Peter is with Peter? And suppose he should add the *power of Peter, is Peter.*" "I would ask whether a revelation from heaven is necessary to instruct us, that the attributes of a being are with that being, or what can be thought of the assertion, the *power of God, is God himself.* Understand the word God in any sense you please, if it mean *supreme* God; then it reduces itself to this, either that one attribute is the supreme God, or that there are as many Gods as attributes. If it mean an inferior God, then the *power of God* being an inferior God, implies that his other attributes are superior Gods."* Besides, if this attribute became flesh and dwelt among men in Christ, who is distinct for the Father, and has no oneness with the Father, according to Mr. W.'s own favorite mode of reasoning, the Father must, for the time being, have been bereft of his power, for this power became flesh and dwelt among men! Besides again, what is gained by Mr. W. by considering the Logos, the power of God or any attribute of God, for on that ground, Christ was one of the attributes of God, and of course divine.

We must detain the reader a moment longer on Mr. W.'s mode of treating this verse. We hope every one, who has the sermon at hand, will turn to the 14 and 15 pages, and see how slightly he passes over this verse and the immediate connexion. He leaves the connexion, and goes to the close of the book, and quotes a passage to prove that Jesus *was Christ, the son of God.* If the man felt himself hard pressed for argument, as I apprehend every man must, when attempting to make the first of John consistent with the Unitarian views of Christ, it would have been as well, for his *intelligent* readers at least, to have stopped short, as to have pressed in again the old assertion, viz. "*Christ is the son of God,*" (which we all believe and which we believe too, to be perfectly consistent with his supreme divinity,) and then infer that the *word* (Logos) cannot mean anything divine, because it would make the apostle so inconsistent.

* See Prof. Stuarts' Letters, p. 60.

"You cannot, he says, think the apostle so inconsistent as to suppose he would *begin* his history, by asserting that Jesus was God, and conclude, by saying he had composed his work to prove directly the contrary, even that Jesus was the anointed Son of God!"

Did Mr. W. suppose that any of his readers were so "*ignorant*" as to have this imposed upon them for argument; or could he himself be so little acquainted with the controversy, as not to know that he was here again begging the main question? Just in the same way he may prove that no Trinitarian writer ever meant to assert the deity of Christ, because in all their books, they have asserted that he was the Son of God, yea even that he was the Son of man.*

But as Mr. W. chooses to pass over the immediate connexion, we will now go back to it, for in the connexion the apostle used expressions which explain his meaning, and which, to our minds, confirm most fully the deity of the Logos. Immediately after saying, "The same (Logos) was in the beginning with God," he adds, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." Here it is asserted that *the word* is the creator of all things. Is he not then God? Can any but God create? When the word God is applied to inferior beings, the connexion always designates the meaning. Men or inferior beings are never called God *simply*. We read of "a god to Pharaoh"; we read, "I have said ye are gods, but *ye shall die like men*." Is a mistake possible here, the meaning is explained by the connexion. But the *word* (Logos) is called God simply, and that too in such connexion that the context, instead of furnishing us with reasons for understanding the word God in an *inferior* sense, as is usual when this designation is applied to inferior beings, has plainly and unequivocally taught us, that this God (the Logos) *cre-*

* Mr. W.'s argument all the way is merely this, to oppose to those passages which clearly contain the divinity of Christ, those which contain his humanity, but this does not meet the main question at all, for those who believe in his divinity, believe in his humanity also.

In reference to this sophistry, an able English periodical has the following pertinent paragraph.

"One half, on the most moderate computation, of the reasonings, declamations, and witticisms of Unitarian writers, would fall to the ground, were this stale but convenient artifice to be taken from them. To all the passages which declare the pre-existence and Deity of Christ, the Socinian has nothing to oppose, but other passages which declare his humanity,—a doctrine which *he knows* that his opponent believes as firmly as himself, though he would insinuate the contrary. *He knows*, too, that the subordination of Christ, as mediator, to Him who sent him, his prophetic character as the Apostle of God, together with the necessary dependance of the efficacy of his work on the appointment, acceptance, and ratification of the Father,—points necessarily involved in the humanity of Christ,—are all acknowledged and firmly believed by Orthodox Christians; nay more, that they are the familiar topics of unembarrassed illustration in their pulpits. But then he says, there is a contradiction in all this. He may say so, if he chooses: but whose word have we for it? "Doubtless ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you. But we have understanding as well as you." Do Orthodox Christians believe it as a contradiction? Did Bacon, or Boyle, or Pascal, or Leibnitz regard it as a contradiction? We do not appeal to them as authorities for the truth of the doctrine, but we may call them in as testimonies to the fact, that such a belief is compatible with all that is comprehensive, and acute, and profound in the human intellect. And then we ask, where is the modesty, the integrity, the decency of our modern Unitarians in treating the doctrine of our Lord's divinity as a palpable contradiction, and in sheltering themselves behind this supposed contradiction, in a systematic misrepresentation of the opinions of those who believe in it, as if they denied that He who was emphatically the Son of God, was also the Son of man?—*Eclectic Review*.

ated the universe. The question then is reduced to this simple state, Is he who created the universe, truly and properly divine? Is he who spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast, who said let there be light and there was light, Is he God or man? Can it be possible that John ascribed the creation of the world to any being but the true God only? If so, then the works of creation can no longer prove the existence of God. The works of creation are an evidence of no higher being than their creator. Compare Gen. i. and Acts, xvii. 23—26, with John, i. 1—3, and 10; Heb. i. 10—12; Col. i. 14—17, and then say is it possible to admit the rules of interpretation, and not admit that the apostle designed to assert that Christ is the Creator of the universe? And if Creator, can we deny that he is truly divine? Is not creative power the appropriate and peculiar attribute of the supreme God? Does not the Old Testament abound with passages, which ascribe the work of creation to Jehovah alone?

The connexion then in John, i. explains the meaning of the "*Word*," or *Logos*, and shows that he was the creator of the world. "*And the word was God.*"

Will it be replied, that his power was delegated power? Can the creation of the universe, then, be by delegation, by an inferior and subordinate being? What then can be meant by omnipotence, omniscience, and infinite wisdom being delegated? For if the act of creation does not prove the being who created, to be omnipotent, omniscient, and allwise, then what can prove a being possessed of these perfections? and what evidence have we that there is a being of such perfections? Can God delegate these perfections? Can he delegate almighty power, and infinite wisdom, to a *finite* being? Does not the possession of attributes, which are the peculiar and distinguishing prerogative of the supreme God, prove that he is God? The apostle John then throws much light upon the first verse, by the 3d and 10th verses, for by deciding the question that Christ did create the world, he has decided consequently, that he must be truly divine, and of course, the meaning of the phrase, *he was God*—God not in an inferior sense, but the very God who created the world. It were easy to produce many passages of the New Testament which ascribe the same works to Christ that are ascribed to God as his peculiar work, and in such connexion too, as to show that he is divine, and worthy of divine honors. As a specimen, we refer to John, v. 17—27. In these verses, he claims the honor of working as the Father. And on the ground of his works, it is here said, that all should honor him, *even as they honor the Father*. Now how could Mr. W. pass entirely over all these considerations, arising directly out of the connexion, and, in less than two small duodecimo pages, think to satisfy the candid and intelligent, that *the Word*, meant, not that which became flesh, (see 14th verse,) but "the power of God considered as in action?"

When too, neither the definition of the term, according to any lexicographer, nor the legitimate rules of interpretation will bear such a construction. What could he think of the intelligence of an audience, or of the readers, who would be satisfied with the superficial and sophistical manner, in which, he has treated this verse?

We must leave other considerations connected with this passage, for want of room, and will only add the testimony of two scholars of very distinguished merit. The learned Griesbach, on whose authority Mr. W. seems sometimes to depend, says, "That passage in particular, John i. 1—3, is so clear, and so much above all exception, that it never can be overthrown, and wrested from the defenders of the truth, by the daring attempts of either commentators or critics." President Dwight says, "in this passage of Scripture, St. John has not only declared that Christ is God; but, to prevent any possible mistake, concerning what he meant by the word *God*, has told us that he is co-eternal with God the Father, and that he is the Creator of every thing which exists. Were the Scriptures allowed to speak their own language, this single passage would decide the controversy; for it is impossible to declare in stronger language, or more explicit, that Christ is God in the highest sense, originally and without derivation."*

Mr. W. remarks on Acts, xx. 28,—“To feed the church of *God*, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Of this he says, ‘the word *God* should be changed into the word *Lord*, for this is the *original* word.’ This is mere conjecture. Even Griesbach allows that the common reading can be defended by arguments more or less specious. In some manuscripts it is *God*, in some *Lord*, in others, *Lord and God*. In the Greek of our Bible it is *Θεός*, God. It, (*Θεός*,) will not bear to be rendered *Lord*. “This reading, the church of God, is found at least in eight manuscripts, is quoted by the ancient Fathers back to the Fourth century, and besides, it accords with the tenor of the Bible to speak of the church of *God*, rather than the church of the *Lord*. And it accords also, with the common language of the Bible, to call Jesus Christ God,—the mighty God—the great God,—the true God. The verse, therefore, as it stands in our translation, and in the original of the common version, precisely accords with the general language of the Bible. And any system, which, for its support, requires the alteration of this and so many other similar passages, should be suspected.”†

‘But as the verse now *stands*, he says, you could not be led into the error of supposing that the word *God* was applied to *Jesus*.’ And here again comes in his old assertion, by which *any and every* passage may be set aside. “*God* is a *spirit*. Jesus, he says, *cannot* be meant, for he had flesh and blood.” Did he not remember,

* Dwight's Theology, vol. 2, p. 61.

† See Smith's View of the Trinity, 2d ed. p. 79. Also Dr. Adam Clark in loc.

it is written, "*the Word became flesh and dwelt among men.*" "Great is the mystery of godliness, *God was manifest in the flesh.*"

Romans, ix. 5. "Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."

"At first sight," Mr. W. says, "you might think Paul declared that Jesus was God. But you will be convinced to the contrary, if you look at the sense and connexion. Paul said Christ was a regular descendant of the Israelites. This is plain. Now could he say in the same breath that THIS JEWISH DESCENDANT WAS GOD ALMIGHTY? Can you believe the inspired apostle would utter such an absurdity?"

Now examine this argument, and see what it is, else than his same old assumption. "Christ was a regular descendant of the Israelites." This all Trinitarians believe. Now from this, Mr. W. infers that he cannot be God, "for this would make the apostle utter an absurdity." But this is the very thing in dispute, whether he who according to the flesh descended from the Israelites, is not also, the one who left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was,—whether he is not also, as the text affirms, God over all, blessed forever. The question is not whether, in Mr. W.'s estimation, this is an absurdity, but whether the Scriptures teach this. We must determine the meaning of the passage by the fair rules of interpreting language, and if this brings us to a result which will not harmonize with Mr. W.'s other preconceived notions, he must settle that with the apostle. We are inquiring what the apostle does plainly teach, and not whether he is absurd.

Mr. W. has the following, which bears the semblance of argument, but which, even, at "first sight," will not be taken for demonstration.

"Perhaps you will say that he spoke of his human nature, because he used the phrase—'as concerning the flesh.' Very well. I take you on your own ground. In the verse but one above, Paul speaks of his '*kinsmen according to the flesh.*' Had his kinsmen two natures? If you cannot admit this, you cannot consistently admit that this phrase means any thing more than *natural descent*. In this last sense, and in no other, is it ever used by the sacred writers. Now you must conclude, either that the apostle declared a regular descendant of the Jews was God Almighty—a shocking absurdity, or that he did not call Christ God."

Here the writer seems very confident and well pleased with his argument. Whether he could be sincere, or whether it was an artful design to divert the attention of the hearer or reader it is not easy to say, "Very well. I will take you on your own ground," that is, will allow that the phrase, "*concerning the flesh,*" regards his human nature. He then says, "Paul speaks of his *kinsmen according to the flesh*. Had his kinsmen two natures?" Let every reader look at this sophistry. Did Mr. W. suppose that any body argued the two natures of Christ from the single phrase, "as concerning the flesh Christ came." It is only his *human* nature here expressed, and his *divine* nature in the last clause, "*who is over all, God blessed forever.*" His question then, from the phrase, Paul's

"kinsman according to the flesh," should have been, had they human nature? not, "have they two natures?" And if afterwards he finds it said expressly concerning them, (the kinsmen of Paul,) as it is said of Christ, that they are *God over all*,—that they not only descended from David, but are the root of David—that they were not only the children of Abraham, but were before Abraham, then it will be in time to ask, had *they* two natures?

Admit that the phrase "*concerning the flesh*," means no more than natural descent, it still relates to his human nature, and in no way affects the argument. It only spreads over a little more surface, and allows him again, even the second time under the same head, to bring in his touchstone—his *own assertion* that "it is a shocking absurdity to suppose that he, who was a regular descendant of the Jews, could be also divine." The whole argument is, Christ cannot be divine because he is human; as though he had forgotten that the question, between him and those he meant to refute, is, whether the passage asserts Christ's *divinity* as well as *humanity*. This is a very convenient way of surmounting difficulties. In this way a man might very briefly prove, or disprove, anything. He might prove that Christ is the *offspring* and not the *root* of David, by quoting those passages which relate to his lineal descent from David, and then assert that it is absurd to suppose that he who descended from David a thousand years after his death, was David's root or progenitor. "Can you believe the inspired apostle would utter such an absurdity?" Or he may with the same despatch prove the other side of the question, by quoting those passages which speak of his pre-existence to David, which speak of his being before Abraham, and then infer that he cannot be the son of David. This would be a "shocking absurdity," for David in spirit called him Lord. How then can he be his son? Who does not see that this way of arguing will cut short all theological disputes, and save a man the trouble of either proving or disproving anything? Is a text quoted in proof of any doctrine, no matter how plainly and unequivocally the language, in its natural import, conveys the doctrine? It is only to assert that the doctrine is absurd, and we must therefore find some other meaning. All the plain declarations of the word of God may be thus forced into some fancied construction, and of what value is our revelation from heaven? Is not this a serious matter? Will it answer thus to trifle with the word of God?

After in this way getting rid of the obvious meaning of the text, Mr. W. gives what he considers the true meaning. "*Christ who is blessed by God—or God-blessed, over them all forever.*" This construction, which is from Dr. Taylor, has no foundation, and is resorted to for the obvious purpose of getting rid of the doctrine which the passage naturally contains. "This text asserts the deity of Christ in terms as strong and unequivocal as language

could well afford. He is, "*over all, God blessed forever.*" President Dwight says, "This passage cannot be avoided by any means except a resolute denial."

Doddridge says, "I must improve this memorable text as a proof of *Christ's proper divinity*, which I think the opposers of that doctrine have never been able, nor will ever be able to answer."

Dr. Adam Clark says, "Here the apostle most distinctly points out the *two fold* nature of our Lord, his *eternal Godhead* and his humanity; and all the transpositions of *particles* and alterations of points in the universe, will not explain away this doctrine. As this verse contains such an eminent proof of the deity of Christ, no wonder that the opposers of his divinity should strive with their utmost skill and cunning to destroy its force. And it must be truly painful to a mind that has nothing in view but *truth*, to see the mean and hypercritical methods used to elude the force of this text. And when we take other Scriptures into the account, where his essential Godhead is particularly expressed, such as Colos. i. 16, 17, for by him were all things created, &c. and John, i. 3, we shall find that he is not *God* by investiture or office, but properly and essentially such, for it is impossible to convey in human language, to human apprehension, a more complete and finished display of what is *essential to Godhead*, indivisible from it, and incommunicable to any created nature, than what is contained in the above verses. And while these words are allowed to make a part of divine revelation, the *essential Godhead* of Jesus Christ will continue to be a doctrine of that revelation.

"I pass by the groundless and endless conjectures about reversing some of the particles, and placing points in different positions, as they have been all invented to get rid of the doctrine of Christ's divinity, which is so obviously acknowledged by the simple text: it is enough to state that there is no omission of these important words, in any Manuscript or Version yet discovered."

Professor Stuart says, "In regard to this text, it may be remarked *first*, that although Griesbach has filled his margin with conjectural and other readings, he attributes no considerable weight to any of them; for all the Manuscripts of the Epistle to the Romans, which have been collated, *contain the text as it stands*; as do *all the ancient Versions*, and *nearly all* the Fathers—But on no text has greater pains been bestowed, in order to devise an unusual construction and meaning." After noticing some of the conjectures, he adds, "Enough of amending the apostle's words by conjecture, without the authority of a single Manuscript or Version.—No Text, no Manuscript gives us a trace of either of these readings. To invent them, therefore, and force them upon the text; or to substitute a conjecture, which originated from theological speculation, against the plain and incontrovertible evidence of the integrity of the text; what is it, but to introduce a principle funda-

mentally subversive of all interpretation and criticism, and give up the Scriptures to be moulded to every man's own wishes?

"All conjectures and theories, then, appear to be quite incompetent to explain away the common rendering of the verse, and the meaning connected with it. On the other hand, we may ask; How comes it that Christ, according to his *human nature*, is said to have descended from the Fathers? What if I should affirm, that David, as to his human nature was descended from Jesse? Would you not of course ask, what other nature had he, except human? And such an inquiry forced upon us by the expression in question, the apostle has immediately answered; as to his nature not human, he was supreme God, blessed forever, Amen. I do not argue that Christ is divine, merely from having the appellation *God* bestowed upon him. But if, *who is over all, God*, be not *supreme God*; and if the antithesis in this verse do not require us to understand a divine nature here, then I must despair of ever discovering the sentiment of any text of Scripture, by using any or all the rules of exegesis."*

Whether these men, and the host of others of equal celebrity, were all "ignorant," and therefore, "*not answerable for their opinions*," or are not "sincere Christians," and in the "*deplorable situation*" of having denied the Lord Jesus before men, and whom he will deny before his Father in heaven, we shall leave for Mr. W. to determine.

1 Tim. iii. 16. "God was manifest in the flesh." Mr. W. says, the word God should be changed to the words, *he who*. Without any hesitation, and without giving any authority, he says, this is the correct translation of the original Greek." We deny this. The Greek word is *Θεός*, which is always translated *God*. Our translation then is right, and as it should be. "After all the controversy about the genuineness of this text," says Prof. Stuart, "it seems to me quite evident that it must be acknowledged according to the rules of criticism."† "It appears to me a plain case that the authorities which Griesbach himself has adduced, would fairly lead to a decision different from his own, respecting the genuineness of the reading *Θεός*."‡ Besides, the thing asserted in this verse is precisely the same with what John has said in his Gospel, i. 14. The word (who is called *God*, ver. 1,) was made flesh and dwelt among us.

1 John, v. 20. "And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." The argument of Mr. W. is here again as elsewhere.

'You cannot refer *this* to Jesus, for you would thus make him the true God,' and 'you shut out the Father from being any part of God. This would be false and absurd.'

* See Stuart's Letters to Dr. Channing, pp. 78—82. † See Macknight in loc. Also, Prof. Stuart's Sermon, from Matt. xviii. 20, pp. 29, 30. ‡ Prof. Stuart's Letters, p. 89. Also, Smith's View of the Trin.

Every one will now detect the sophistry of such reasoning. Making Jesus the true God, does not, on the Trinitarian hypothesis, shut out the Father; for he and the Father are *one*. "He is in the Father and the Father in him." Mr. W. next quotes, 2 John, 7, to show that the pronoun *this*, does not always refer to the nearest antecedent. But it is in nowise a parallel case. In this last passage, the sense determines at once, that the pronoun does not refer to the nearest antecedent. The sense renders it necessary to refer it further back. But in the text, 1 John, v. 20. There is no such necessity, except on the previous assumption of the certainty that Christ is not the true God; but this is to assume what is in dispute. On the other hand, neither the grammatical construction, nor the idiom of the writer, allows us to refer the phrase, "*This is the true God and eternal life*," to any other, than the Saviour. We say the idiom of John as a writer requires this. For ETERNAL LIFE must refer to the same antecedent, as the *true God*. And John is in the habit of using these words, *life*, and *life eternal*, as applied to Christ. He is called the way, the truth, and the *life*—the bread of LIFE—giving *life* to the world. 1 John, i. 2. "This LIFE, (Christ) was manifested, and we have seen it, and do testify to you and declare, the *eternal life*, which was with the Father, and was manifest to us." As this appellation LIFE AND LIFE ETERNAL is so frequently given to Christ by John, we must suppose he meant Christ, by the phrase *eternal life*, in the passage under consideration. But the same he calls the true God. In this passage then, Christ is called the TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE.

We shall not stop to dispute about the genuineness of the other passage he notices, 1 John, v. 7, for the doctrine of Christ's divinity is amply supported without it, by passages the genuineness of which no one will question.

Mr. W. says, "I think I have noticed all the verses which can give you the least trouble in explaining." By examination, the reader will notice, that in regard to every one of these passages, he found it necessary, before he could get rid of their "*first sight*" meaning, to assert the absurdity of the thing in dispute, and then say, the passage cannot mean this, for this would make it speak an absurdity. This is what logicians call reasoning in a circle, when he gets round, he is just where he was when he started.*

We expected next to see the argument noticed, which arises from the attributes of Christ, for this is the next particular which he *promised* to consider. Yet he substitutes in the place of this particular, merely the consideration of one passage, viz.: Rev. xxii. 13. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the end."

* The reader will bear in mind, that the test, to which all these passages are brought, is, Mr. W.'s bare assertion that Christ cannot be divine, because he is Son. He asserts that Christ cannot be divine, and then it follows of course that none of these passages can prove his divinity!

Without noticing the parallel passages, he endeavors to prove that this passage means that Jesus is the beginning and end of the Gospel dispensation. And his proof is so satisfactory to himself, that he says, 'if you contradict it, you in effect, deny the Lord Jesus.' Now let us compare this passage with other parallel passages. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Turn to Rev. i. 8, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY." Isaiah, xlv. 6, "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the First and the Last; and beside me there is no God." Isaiah, xlviii. 12, 13, 17, "I am he; I am the First, I also am the Last. Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens.—Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the holy one of Israel, I am the Lord thy God." Can any one doubt who is meant here? Is it not Jehovah, who hath laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand hath spanned the heavens? And does not Christ in the verse first named, and in Rev. i. 8, call himself in the same connexion, the *Almighty*, and appropriate to himself the very same language which is applied as descriptive of him, beside whom, there is no God? What need was there then of resorting to a forced construction, when parallel passages are full and explicit? Taken in connexion with other passages, this is proof of his eternal existence, and of his creative—almighty power. But why should the consideration of the *attributes* of Christ be passed over by merely noticing this *one* passage? Why did he pass over the *numerous* passages which represent Christ as omniscient—"I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts." "*As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father;*" omnipresent—"Wherever two or three are gathered together in his name;" eternal and immutable—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever;" almighty—"Which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY;" having creative and upholding power—"For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, *all* things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist?" Now, "he that built all things is God." Why should he thus slip over the consideration of the divine attributes of Christ, after he *had* promised to notice them, and then say in his conclusion, p. 26, that "the names, *attributes*, &c. of Jesus, instead of proving him to be God, afford the most satisfactory evidence of his inferiority to the Father." Is it correct to draw inferences from premises which have not been considered? Or is it fair to carry an impression by the *conclusion*, that the previous steps on which the conclusion rests, had been considered, when in fact they had been passed over, with

scarcely a notice ! If this would pass for argument from the pulpit, could Mr. W. suppose that an intelligent reader, who would have time in his leisure perusal to think and examine, would be satisfied ? We shall not judge of the man's motives in thus slipping over the argument which proves Christ's proper divinity, viz. : that incommunicable divine *attributes* are ascribed to him.

But to prevent swelling our pamphlet to a volume, we must omit some parts of the sermon, and will therefore, now pass over the other particulars in which he notices very *cursorily*, "the offices, works, and words of Jesus," and *demonstrates*, with the same despatch, and in much the same way he has so often done before, that "*we deny the Lord Jesus*," if we consider his qualifications to judge the world, his power to forgive sins, and to work miracles, and his name's being equally associated with the Father's in the formula of baptism, as proof of his divinity.

Mr. W. proceeds to consider a second instance of the first kind of denying the Lord Jesus, which he finds in John, v. 17, 19.

"The Jews accused Jesus of making himself equal with God ! by so doing, they contradicted his declarations ; and consequently denied the Lord Jesus."—"He (Jesus,) quickly denied the truth of their accusation with his strongest affirmation. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son *can do nothing* of himself. A more explicit, direct, and positive denial he could not have given."

But a consideration of the connexion and circumstances will show, that Christ did not design to deny the charge of making himself equal with God, but rather to justify his own conduct. "The Son can do nothing of himself, *but what he seeth the Father do.*" This last clause qualifies the other, and shows that he did not intend to deny, that he had healed the impotent man on the Sabbath day, but, that in so doing, he had done nothing *criminal*, nothing "*but what the Father doeth.*" "*For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*" He here claims the power of doing whatsoever the Father doeth, and from what follows, it is evident, that he meant to place himself on an *equality*, not only as it respects the power of doing what his Father did, but also as it respects the honors due for divine works. "*For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and restoreth them to life, so also the Son restoreth to life whom he pleases. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, THAT ALL MEN MIGHT HONOR THE SON, EVEN AS THEY HONOR THE FATHER.*"

"Is there not here an equality of power and honor ascribed to the Father and Son ? The Son is indeed introduced as "head over all things," but could he be such a head, could "*all judgment be committed to him*," if at the same time, he was not also, divine and consequently omniscient ? It is perfectly plain that in so far as the "committing of judgment to the Son is concerned, it must be to the mediatorial person ; to one who in respect to office is subordinate to God. But in so far as *qualifications*, requisite to perform the duties which that commitment requires, are concerned,

the Saviour is divine; and the honor to be claimed by him, is the same with that which the divinity himself claims.

"In fact, I cannot well conceive how our Saviour could have used the words above quoted, without having exposed himself to renewed and just accusations of the Jews for blaspheming, unless he were really divine. The Jews had accused him of violating the Sabbath, because he had, on that day, healed the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. The reply of Christ to them was, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work;" which, if I understand the argument, must mean; My Father has never ceased to work on the Sabbath, in carrying on the operations of the natural and moral world; he supersedes the law of the Sabbath. I have the same right. "The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath." The Jews then sought to slay him, because, as they affirmed, "he had violated the Sabbath, and said that God was his Father, *making himself equal with God.*" In reply to their bitter accusations, Jesus made use of the language above cited; telling them that he did whatever the Father did, and was entitled to the same honor. Was this relinquishing his claim to the equality with God, which the Jews had charged him with assuming? Or was it speaking out plainly, that he wrought on the Sabbath day by the same right that the Father did, and was entitled to the same deference? Can his words, interpreted without regard to any preconceived theory, be made to signify less than this?"* And do we "deny the Lord Jesus," by receiving the natural meaning of his words? Mr. W. follows this instance of "denying the Lord Jesus," with three particulars, to prove that, "If we say Jesus is *equal* with God, we contradict the declarations of Moses and the Prophets, . . . of Christ, . . . and of the Apostles."

Under each of these heads, the argument is the same begging of the main question, which appeared under the former heads. Under the first, he has the following:

"This is my beloved *son* in whom I am well pleased." This is conclusive evidence that Jesus is a distinct being from the infinite God; and also, that he is no *third* part, no *equal* part, no *part*, of the infinite God; but truly the *son* of God."

Under the second, he has the following:

"Speaking of himself, he said—'I am the *son* of God.' If he is a *son*, he must depend on a *Father* for existence; for no son can exist without a *Father*."

Under the third, he has the following:

"If he was born in any sense, he cannot be equal to the Father who caused his birth. John asks—'Who is a liar, but he that denyeth that *Jesus* is the *Christ*.' If he be *Christ*, he cannot be equal with God. For the words *Christ* and *Messiah* mean *anointed*; and when applied to Jesus, mean anointed with the holy spirit. And if Jesus was the *Christ*, was thus anointed, he cannot be equal to the God from whom he received the Spirit without measure."

Now the amount of the whole, is, *he is Son, and distinct from the Father, and, therefore, cannot be equal with his Father.* Who

* Stuart's Letters, pp. 99—101.

denies that he is Son, and distinct from the Father? But is this conclusive evidence that he cannot possess the same attributes—that he cannot be equal? A son and a father are distinct, and no part of each other; but may they not possess the same nature, and be equal? We repeat it, we believe, as fully as Mr. W., that Christ is the *Son* of God, that he is the Messiah, anointed, &c. that there is a sense, in which, the Father is “greater than the Son.” All this is perfectly consistent with our views of Christ’s divinity and equality with the Father. And why should Mr. W., after all the explanations that have been given on this subject, repeat again, through four heads, in substance the same argument, “he is Son, and therefore, cannot be equal with the Father;” when the dispute is, whether he, who is Son, Messiah, &c. is not also divine? Does he not at this late day, understand the ground of the controversy? Or does he think to make his opponents appear ridiculous by misrepresenting them? Is not a writer, who will spread over so much surface in this way, hard pressed for argument? His conclusion is on the assumption, that the appellation *Son of God*, necessarily denotes, not only a separate person, but one who cannot be equal with his Father, and who cannot have the same nature with his Father. And his whole argument, through the whole sermon, is built on this assumption. But this assumption is not admitted. Trinitarians believe both that he is *Son*, and that he is equal with his Father.

But here, Mr. W. will say, “What an absurdity is this!—The Son of God, himself God!” Unitarians are perpetually stumbling at this stumbling stone, and casting it in the way of others. “They impose upon themselves, and upon others, by a species of sophistry, by which no wise man ought to be deceived. In this trite objection, Mr. W. is continually begging the main question in debate. Only admit the Trinitarian distinction of persons in the Godhead, and the pretended absurdity vanishes at once. If there are in the Godhead three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and each of these three, in inseparable union with the other two, is God, then there is no absurdity in saying, that Jesus Christ is both the Son of God, and himself God. This does not suppose that he is Son of himself, it only imports that he is Son of the Father.*

Neither does his being Son, imply inferiority in nature to the Father. On the contrary, it imports sameness and equality of nature. Was not David of the same nature with Jesse, whose son he was, and of equal attributes and dignity? Is not a true and proper son always of the same nature with his Father? Jesus is called the *Son of man*, because he partakes of human nature and is truly man. Why then should we not understand, that he is called the *Son of God*, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER, because he also has the same nature with the Father, and is truly

* See what is said of different senses, in which the word Father is used, on pp. 12, 13.

divine? It was so understood by the Jews, to whom, the appellation, Son of God, as belonging to the Messiah, was familiar. Jesus said to them, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Therefore the Jews sought to kill him, *because he said that God was his Father*, making himself equal with God." They understood him to call God his Father, not in a sense, in which, angels and men call him their Father; but in a peculiarly high sense, in a sense which made God his natural father, and himself in nature divine, and equal with the Father. It was upon this ground, that they afterwards persisted in charging him with blasphemy, and finally condemned him to death.—Jesus said to Nathanael, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Perceiving in this the divine attribute of omniscience, Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God;" evidently understanding this appellation to import true divinity. It cannot reasonably be doubted, that such was the understanding of Peter, and of Thomas, and the other disciples, when they acknowledged Jesus to be "*the Christ, the Son of the living God*," and worshipped him as their LORD AND THEIR GOD.*

Mr. W. found it necessary to notice some passages of Scripture, which seem "at first sight," to imply, that Jesus is equal with God. These passages, he disposes of, much in the same way, as he disposed of passages before. We think it well, however, to notice particularly his treatment of one passage, viz.: Philippians, ii. 6, "*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.*"

"Paul is inculcating humility upon his converts, from the example of Jesus. 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.' Now can you believe, that when the apostle is exhorting his brethren, *to think of others more highly than themselves*, he would mention as an instance of Christ's humility, *that he did not think his own Father higher than himself*; that he thought it nothing wrong to claim an equality with the infinite Jehovah! A singular way indeed of promoting humility; and making Christians of the same mind with Christ. No. No, you will not attribute such absurdities to the pen of the inspired Paul. What then must we do? Does not the passage read, that 'he thought it not robbery to be equal with God?' In our translation, it does. But you should remember that this epistle was written in the Greek language. And you may know that scholars of all parties agree that our translation of this sentence is not correct. What then is the true rendering? The literal meaning of the Greek words is this. '*He did not think of the robbery, the being like God.*'"

The reader is requested to examine particularly the above paragraph. You perceive, that he endeavors to make the expression, "*thought it not robbery to be equal with God*," appear absurd, when taken in connexion with the apostle's design. But every reader will perceive, that his claim to an equality with God does not stand alone, and is not, *in itself*, the act of humility which makes him a pattern of this virtue. He who being in the form of God, and who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, *made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant*,

* See Worcester's third Letter to Dr. Channing, p. 16.

and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, *he humbled himself*, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Now this alters the case. It is his *coming down* from his exalted state—his leaving the glory he had with the Father before the world was,—his taking the form of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, that renders him an example of *humility*. And does not the circumstance, that his equality is first mentioned, greatly increase his humility in becoming a servant? Is there not a greater manifestation of humility, when a *Prince* condescends to a menial service, than when a servant, in the ordinary discharge of duty, does the same thing? From being in *the form of God, he took the form of a servant*. A parallel passage, is found in 2 Cor. viii. 9, Though *he was rich*, yet for your sakes *he became poor*, that ye through his poverty might be made rich. This is brought as an example of the self-denying love of Christ, to animate the church at Corinth in their benevolent deeds. Now what would you think, if we should reason in the same way as Mr. W. did, and say, ‘Can you believe that when the apostle is exhorting his brethren to be benevolent, he would mention, as an instance of Christ’s benevolence, that *he was rich*. This is absurd. We must not attribute such an absurdity to Paul, we must then alter the passage, and say, *he never was rich*.’ Now this is precisely the same kind of reasoning. But when we read the rest of the passage, we learn that his being *rich*, is the very circumstance which increases, and renders so illustrious his self-denial, in sacrificing it all, and becoming poor for our sakes.

But what can he mean by his being once rich, and becoming poor? He was never reduced in his earthly circumstances. In this respect he was always poor. But he was *rich*, in the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and he became poor, by leaving it for a time, by assuming human nature, taking the form of a servant, and living in poverty, and affliction, and dying on the cross. Or, as in the passage before us, “Being in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men?” This is humility indeed. And we see, that it corresponds with the manner of Paul, to contrast his humble condition here on earth, with his exalted state before his incarnation, for the purpose of enhancing our sense of his self-denial and humiliation. And besides, if the phrase, “*form of a servant*,” means, as is obvious from the sentiment which the apostle was inculcating, and from the history of our Saviour’s life, that he did actually take the condition of one, who was in a humble and depressed state, and persevere in it to the very death of the cross, then must not the phrase “*form of God*,” with which,

form of a servant is here contrasted, mean the condition of one who is actually divine ?

But Mr. W. looking at the expression, "*thought it not robbery to be equal with God,*" alone, disjoined from the circumstance of his humbling himself from that state to the condition of a servant, ridicules the idea of there being any humility in his claiming equality with God. He therefore concludes, that the passage cannot mean, that Christ was equal with God. "Paul could not be so absurd. We must then find some other meaning." He seems to be somewhat embarrassed to know how to dispose of this passage. He says,

"What then must we do ? Does not the passage read, that 'he thought it not robbery to be equal with God ?' In our translation it does. But you should remember that this Epistle was written in the Greek language. And you may know that scholars of all parties agree that our translation of this sentence is not correct. What then is the true rendering ? The literal meaning of the Greek words is this. '*He did not think of the robbery, the being like God.*'"

We know not how to express our surprise, after he had referred us to the Greek, and inquired for a *true* rendering, that he should say, the *literal meaning* of the Greek words is this, "*He did not think of the robbery,*" &c. Notwithstanding all the evidence we had, from the former part of the sermon, that he was determined to model the Scriptures to his own party views, we were not prepared to believe, that in the midst of his zeal, and after having spoken about what scholars know, he would hazard his own reputation as a scholar. He professed to give a literal translation. Why did he not go to his Greek Testament and Lexicon, instead of adopting a rendering, which has been given for party purposes, and which, instead of being literal, is not even admissible ? And we ask Mr. W. what authority he has for his assertion, that this is a *literal* translation. We do not ask what other Unitarian has adopted this means to get rid of the obvious meaning of the passage, but we ask, what Greek Lexicon, or what Greek authority can he plead as proof of his assertion ? Or even that the Greek is susceptible of such a rendering, without violating the principles of the Greek language ? We know, indeed, that a translation may be given of the passage under consideration, which would make it speak the sentiment the apostle was inculcating, (humility,) more forcibly, but which would not at all affect the consideration of Christ's equality with the Father. Every correct translation will retain the two ideas of Christ's being in the *condition or form of God*, and *his being equal with God*. We will form no conjectures about Mr. W.'s motives, in thus torturing the plain letter of Scripture, or in asserting concerning the *original*, what cannot be supported by any good authority. We need only say, it became *necessary* in order to prepare the way for his conclusion, viz. :

"The Old Testament does not contain *one* passage in which it is either declared, or implied, that the Son is equal with God. The New Testament does not furnish one passage, in which it is either declared, or implied, that the Son is equal with God."

The honest inquirer after truth, who makes the Scriptures his guide, and who feels himself accountable, will be cautious about adopting a conclusion, for the support of which, it is necessary to say so much about *interpolations*, or if there is no plausible ground for this, to condemn the translation, and to assert *that* to be a *literal* one, which every one acquainted with Greek knows, or *ought* to know, is *not* a literal one.

Mr. W. now considers one instance of the second kind of denying the Lord Jesus, i. e. "*by deed.*" We have already expressed our surprise, that in treating the subject of denying Christ "*by deed,*" he should have hit upon *worshipping* him, as either the *only*, or as the most prominent way of denying Christ "*by deed.*" Taking no notice of his persecutors, his betrayers, or his crucifiers, or of those false teachers who are expressly said to deny Christ, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, he fixes upon the beloved disciple John, as *practically* a denier of the Lord Jesus!!!

As the consequences of denying Christ are so awful, and as so much is said by way of warning us against denying Christ, we should suppose that if this sin consisted *peculiarly in worshipping* him, Mr. W. would have been able to bring some plain, express prohibition of this act. Let him bring *one single* passage which says, we shall *not* "honor the Son, as we honor the Father," and it sufficeth us. But such unnatural and forced interpretations, look too much like a determination, at all events, to get over the difficulty to his system, arising from the worship of the "*Lamb who was slain.*" He takes the 22d chapter of Revelations,—a chapter, by the way, full of the divinity of Christ—in which, it is twice said, "*The throne of God and the LAMB*—in which he is called the First and the Last, the same titles that, in the Old Testament, are given to the *only true God*—in which he is called the *root*, and the *offspring* of David,—in which it is said in one verse, "*The Lord God* of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done;" and, in another verse, "*I Jesus*, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. In the 9th verse, Mr. W. considers John, as falling down before Jesus to worship him, and Jesus expressly forbids him. He says, "by turning to the passage in question, you will notice, that Jesus is called the angel." And to justify this assertion, he says, the name angel is given to Jesus, in the first verse of the first chapter of the same book. But the reader, on examination, will perceive that Jesus Christ, whose revelation it was, "*sent* and signified it by *his angel* unto his servant John." He appeals also to the 16th verse of the 22d chapter, to show that Jesus is speaking. But the reader will perceive that Jesus who is speaking, says, "I have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." And the apostle himself says, "I fell down to

worship before the feet of the *angel* which showed me these things," that is, before the feet of the *angel which Jesus sent to testify unto him these things*. Notwithstanding the suddenness of the transition, from one person to another as the speaker, a difficulty common in prophetic writings, yet can anything be more plain, than that it was the *angel* whom *Jesus sent*, before whom John fell down to worship, and not *Jesus himself*, unless *he who sends, and he who is sent*, is one and the same?

Why did not Mr. W. consult parallel passages. In chapter xix. 10, there is another instance of John's offering worship to the angel, and the angel declined the homage in the same manner. In this case, the context affords the most distinct information, that the angel was not Jesus, but he whom Jesus had sent, who was fellow servant with John, and those who had the testimony of Jesus. We need not dwell on this, for the reader will not be in danger, if he turns to the 5th chapter, of supposing that John was forbidden to worship *the Lamb*, before whom he saw *the four beasts, and the four and twenty elders fall down and worship, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the PRAYERS OF SAINTS; and round about whose throne the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing*.

After having considered John as guilty of worshipping Christ, in falling down before the angel whom Christ sent, the way is prepared to say under distinct heads, as before, "If you worship Jesus as God, you disobey the instructions of Moses and the prophets, . . . of Christ, . . . of the Apostles."

Mr. W.'s mode of reasoning is the same here, as formerly. Under the first of these heads, he says,

"They, (Moses and the prophets) have recorded the commands of God. The first is this. 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before *me*.' . . . The word *me* can mean but one person. . . . This *one person* said, by his servant,—'Thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord is a jealous God.' If then you worship Jesus as God, you disobey the first great command and have another God besides your heavenly Father."*

To confirm this, he quotes the prayer of Hezekiah, and says, "This prayer is not addressed to the Son, but to *one* God, in *one* person." Need we make a single remark on this mode of reasoning? Who does not see, that it assumes what remains to be

* The two systems have, then, according to Mr. W., different Gods. The difference then is practical, most vitally and essentially practical. Having two different objects of worship, the systems must be essentially different from the foundation to the top stone. The time was, not long since, when Unitarians represented the difference as trivial, and merely speculative, not such as to affect Christian character, and on this ground, condemned all separations as the effects of bigotry, and want of charity. But the times have changed, and surely, after having commended and circulated this sermon, they will no more complain of Orthodox ministers for refusing to exchange with them, nor of Orthodox Christians for leaving their places of worship. Nor can Christians, who love and worship the Saviour, any longer hesitate in regard to *their* duty.

proved, viz. : that from the *one* God, Jesus is excluded? Do not Trinitarians worship *one* God? Is it not the first article of all their creeds, that there is *but one God*, and that this *one* God is the *only* object of worship? If he had first proved, that the worship of the *one* true God was exclusive of the Word (Logos) who was with God, and who was God, then his argument would have been in point, but now it proves nothing. It is only *his assertion*, that Jesus is not God. After quoting the first command, and the passage, "thou shalt worship no other God," and the prayer of Hezekiah in which he worshipped *one* God, he then says, "All the commands and examples of the Old Testament are in perfect accordance with the specimens quoted." Granted. What then? "Why, that is, all the Old Testament is positive in its instructions to worship *one*, and but *one* God." All true, what then? "If therefore you worship Jesus as God, you disobey the instructions of Moses, and the prophets, and consequently deny the lord Jesus." Now from what does this inference follow? From the fact that there is but *one* God? It yet remains to be proved, that Jesus, in union with the Father and Spirit, is not this *one* God.—That he is not in the Father, and the Father not in him. Before he drew the sweeping conclusion, that in worshipping Jesus, we are guilty of worshipping another God, and are idolaters, should he not have proved the second proposition in his syllogism, "Jesus is not divine—not one with the Father?" His syllogism is,

1. There is but *one* God, the proper object of worship.
2. Jesus is not God who is to be worshipped.
3. Therefore if you worship Jesus, you worship another God.

Who does not see, that in the second part, is assumed the whole thing in dispute, and that until this is proved, *not merely asserted*, the conclusion, in the third, cannot be sustained? Will any respectable Unitarian say this is not sophistry?

Under another head, he brings forward Jesus as the *holy child*, as *anointed by the Father*; as though this were inconsistent with his divinity. And as though he must, at all events, prepare the way for his conclusion, viz. "If you worship Jesus as God, you disobey all apostolic instruction," he *cuts several texts in two*, and leaves out that part which contains worship to the *Son*, in precisely the same way, that the part he quotes does to the *Father*. As an example of the exclusive worship of the *Father*, he quotes 2 John, 3. *Grace be with you from GOD THE FATHER*, here he stops in the middle of the verse, the remainder of which is, "and from *the Lord Jesus Christ*, the Son of the Father." Jude, he says, begins his Epistle with the mention of *God the Father*, and here stops, when *Jesus Christ* immediately follows. And immediately after quoting the first part of each of these passages which contain *God the Father*, he says, "It was their uniform practice to worship the Father of Jesus, and *him only*, as the supreme God."

Whereas, if he had quoted the last half of the passages, with only a comma between, he would have found the *Lord Jesus Christ*, associated equally with the Father. We do not ask, whether this is fairness, but is it *common honesty*? To every one, who does not take the trouble to turn to the passages in question, but who trusts in Mr. W.'s quotation, the impression would be, that the *Father* was worshipped, and that Christ was excluded; but on turning to the passage he finds but *half* was quoted; and the part which contained worship to the *Son*, as much as the other did to the Father, was left out!! On discovering this, we were involuntarily reminded of a writer, who lately quoted a part of a paragraph from Mosheim, to prove that the Trinity was introduced in the fourth century, when the remaining part of the same paragraph, contained proof directly to the contrary.*

In this way, we might prove that *Jesus only*, and not the Father, is to be worshipped, for we might quote the *last* half, and leave the *first*, as well as, he the *first*, and leave the *last*. But no, we will take the whole, and say with the apostle, "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Again, taking Mr. W. on his own ground, he allows that the 2 John, 3, "Grace be with you from *God the Father*, is a prayer to God the Father, whom Jesus taught them to worship, for he quotes it as an example of the worship of the Father. In doing this, he unintentionally concedes, or rather proves, that Christ is an object of worship; for the other part, not only of *this*, but of numerous *other like* passages, contains precisely the same prayer to Christ. The reader will please to turn to the following passages, as proof of this remark. Gal. i. 3. Eph. vi. 23. 2 Tim. i. 2. Tit. i. 4. 1 Cor. i. 3. 2 Cor. i. 2. Eph. i. 2. Phil. i. 2. Col. i. 2. 1 Tim. i. 1, 2. Philem. 3. 1 Thes. i. 1, iii. 11. 2 Thes. i. 1, 2. These, and numerous other passages must be *dissected*, in order to keep out of sight the fact, that Christ, the Son, is equally associated with the Father as an object of invocation and worship. What would you think of a writer, who, to prove that the *Father only* was to be worshipped, should quote, from Matt. xxviii. 19, "*Baptizing them in the name of the Father*," and here stop? But this is precisely the same thing, that Mr. W. has done, with the other passages. There is only this difference, the form of baptism is so familiar, that no one could be deceived in this way. But in regard to the passages Mr. W. has used in this way, not one in ten of his readers, who did not turn to the passages, would suspect any unfairness. It is on the ground of such reasoning, that this writer takes upon himself the responsibility of saying, that we "disobey all apostolic instruction," and at the close of almost every paragraph *unhesitatingly* pronounces us, the "deniers of the Lord

* See Sermon preached at Mr. Whitman's ordination, p. 8.

Jesus"!!! What must we think of a cause which requires such defence?*

He next notices a few texts which seem to ascribe divine honors to Christ. "His disciples worshipped him, but not as God," he says. What is his argument to prove that they worshipped him not as God. "For they said, in so many words, 'of a truth thou art the *Son of God.*'" Wherever he finds Jesus called "*Son of God,*" he finds a distinct proof that he is not God. "*Quod erat demonstrandum.*" But enough has been said on this mode of reasoning. We merely notice it, as we pass along over the sermon, to show that the author is continually recurring to it, or rather that this is the sum and substance of all his argument. In order to shape the passage which requires us to honor the Son, even as we honor the Father, so as to make it consistent with refusing him *divine* honors, he says, we honor the Son as we do the Father, "when we acknowledge him as the commissioned *Son of God*; and receive his instructions as the *wisdom of God*; and obey his precepts as the *commands of God.*" But this makes him a *mere* messenger of God, and places him on a level with Paul and John. For were not Paul and John commissioned messengers of God; and do we not receive their instructions as the wisdom of God; and obey their precepts as the commands of God? Will Mr. W. say then, that we should honor Paul, and John, even as we honor God?

After noticing much in the same manner two or three other passages, he sums up his conclusion as follows:

"The Old Testament does not contain one command to offer religious homage to Jesus; nor an example in which he was worshipped as God. On the contrary, we are instructed, by precept and example, to offer all prayers to the one true God, the Father of Jesus. The New Testament does not once direct us to offer religious homage to Jesus; and does not furnish one example in which he was worshipped as God; but contains explicit prohibitions of the act. On the contrary, it contains ninety passages in which we are directed to offer all prayers to God the Father. I must therefore conclude that Jesus is not to be worshipped as God."

As it respects explicit prohibitions, it will be remembered, that the only one Mr. W. could find, was that John was forbidden to

*In reading the sermon under review, and several other pamphlets recently and diligently circulated by Unitarians, we were forcibly impressed with the reflection, that a cause which was dependent on such kind of support, could not be good. In some of these pamphlets, we find a species of deceptive reasoning which on any other subject, where party feelings had no influence, the same writers would disown as unworthy the name of argument. In others, we find Trinitarians most grossly misrepresented in regard to all their articles of faith, and then held up to ridicule, as believing in absurdities and contradictions. In others, we find slanderous insinuations against the characters of men of unblemished reputation. In many, we find laborious attempts, either to expunge those parts of scripture which seem to favour the divinity of Christ, or if they are suffered to remain, to give them an unnatural and forced interpretation. One writer warns his readers to be on their guard *against what is called the natural signification of words and phrases.* Mr. W. found it necessary to do away the "*first sight*" meaning of many passages. It would seem that they have, practically, adopted the principle of SMALCIUS, who wrote about two centuries since, who says, "We believe that though we find it *not once, nor twice, but frequently, and most expressly* written in Scripture, that *God became man*, it would be much better, as it is an absurd proposition, *to invent some way of speaking*, which might render it proper to be affirmed of God, rather than to understand it in a literal sense." Such is the liberty taken with the Scriptures! What is it, but to desert the Bible as the standard of truth, and erect an altar to our own pride and self-sufficiency? Can such modes of defending a cause receive the blessing of Him, who has guarded his Word with the most awful sanctions, and declared that not one jot or tittle of it shall fail?

worship the *angel* whom Jesus sent ! As it respects the ninety passages which direct us to offer all prayers to the Father, exclusively of the Son, we have a curiosity to know where they are, and whether some of them are not *half passages*, leaving out the part which contains a prayer to Christ.

Now, let us go to "*the law and the testimony*," and there learn whether we are, or are not, once directed "to offer religious homage to Jesus." And let us go with candor, and rely upon what we there find. If we go with teachable dispositions, and take the Bible as it stands, without any glosses or dissections, we may, it is believed, come to the truth on this infinitely important subject. We say infinitely important, for it affects both the object of our worship, and the grounds of our acceptance with God. "If we deny Christ before men, he will deny us before his Father who is in heaven." "*And what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?*" Let us then be honest to ourselves, and go to the Bible, not with desires to support preconceived opinions, or to favor a party ; but to *find the simple truth*, remembering that any advantage which may be gained as a *disputant*, or a *partizan*, will be transient, while the truth will remain eternal, and he that is built upon it, shall be unshaken and immovable in the midst of the storm which shall sweep away every vestige of error. The truth only will benefit us, and nothing can be gained by management or artifice in a concern like this, but the immortal soul may be lost. We should then be tremblingly alive to the inquiry, What is truth ? for it touches our immortal interests. What then, let us simply inquire, did the apostles and primitive disciples of our Lord and Saviour say, and do, relative to the subject before us ? Did they, or did they not, render to the Saviour *religious homage* ?

When the apostles were assembled at Jerusalem, for the first time after the Saviour's ascension to heaven, and were proceeding to elect another apostle in the room of Judas the traitor, they made invocation to the Saviour, and said, *Thou Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen.* The last words of the expiring Stephen, were a prayer to the Saviour. "*And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*" This prayer is offered to Jesus in the very same language, and with the same confidence, with which Jesus, when expiring on the cross, committed his spirit into the hands of the Father. This disciple also implores of the Lord Jesus forgiveness for his murderers. Can a departing spirit be intrusted to any being, and the forgiveness of sin be expected of him, who has not omnipotence and supreme authority ? In writing to the Thessalonians, Paul prays not only to the Father, but to the Lord Jesus Christ, to "direct his way unto them," and that "their hearts might be comforted

and established, in every good word and work." Christians were distinguished in the apostles' time, as those, who called on the name of the Lord Jesus. "*They who call upon the name of Christ*, was a kind of proper name by which they were known." Annanias, when bid by the Saviour to go and inquire for Saul of Tarsus, says, *I have heard how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem ; and here he hath authority, from the chief priests, to bind all that call on thy name.* And when the disciples in Judea heard of Saul's conversion, they said, *Is not this he, who destroyed them which called on this name*, i. e. the name of Christ, in Jerusalem? The same writer again, in his first Epistle to Timothy, points out Christians, by using the phrase, *They that call upon the Lord*, as descriptive of them. These passages show us, that the first Christians were known by this trait in their character, viz. They habitually invoked, or called upon, the name of Christ. And Annanias said to Paul, *Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord.* Paul says to the Romans, *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.* The same apostle to the Corinthians says, *Unto the church of God at Corinth . . . with all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus*, i. e. all Christians ; naming them by mentioning that distinguishing act of their religion, viz. invocation upon Jesus. The same Paul when he had a thorn in the flesh, *besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him.* In these passages the context makes it certain, that by the Lord, Christ is meant.

The apostles were in the habit of supplicating grace and peace from the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as from the Father. *Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.* See the same prayer repeated, in 1 Cor. i. 3. 2 Cor. i. 2. 2 John, 3, and numerous other places. Mr. W. has acknowledged that these contain a prayer to the Father. But the same blessings are solicited from Christ and the Father. "Moreover the holy apostle, who in the visions of God saw heaven opened, tells us that *the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours.* But what are these odours, which the leaders of the heavenly choir present, in the posture of humble adoration, to the Lamb? The writer has told us, *they are the prayers of the saints*, i. e. of the church on earth. Here then, it is made *certain*, that the Lamb is the object of invocation, by the saints on earth, and of religious adoration by the host of heaven above.

Paul does not scruple to direct the same expression of homage and praise to the Saviour, as to God the Father. At the close of his Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, *Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen.* Peter says the same thing ; *Grow*

in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; to him be glory both now and forever, Amen.

In heaven they do the same. Says the holy apostle who enjoyed the visions of God, *Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.* Here is that *Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world*, on the throne of the universe ; here he is represented as worshipped by all heaven, in the same manner, as He is, who sitteth with him on the throne.*

And why should not this be so, if the same apostle, who relates this, is worthy of credit in his other declarations ? He has said that *in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and THE WORD WAS GOD.* He has told us, that *all things were made by him*, and that, *without him was nothing made which was made.* He has said of the Son of God, *This is the true God and eternal life.* Paul also has given us sufficient reason to regard the Saviour as the object of our worship. He has declared him to be *God, over all, blessed forever.* He has affirmed of him, that *in the beginning he laid the foundation of the earth ; that the heavens are the work of his hands ;—and that while they shall perish, he is the same, and his years shall not fail.* He has said, that by him *all things were created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him and for him.* The same apostle has taught us to *look for the blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God even our Saviour Jesus Christ.*† We might add a great number of texts which require us with all the heart to *love him, to obey him, to confide in him, to commit ourselves to him* in such a manner, as implies religious homage, and as we can never persuade ourselves to do, with respect to any being who is not divine.

‘ We are taught to derive our happiness, and we enjoy our only hope from *trusting in Christ.* But if he is only *finite*, why should

* Ecclesiastical History is full in its confirmation of the worship of Christ. Justin Martyr, about forty years after the death of St. John, says, “ We worship and adore the Father, and the Son who came from him, and the prophetic Spirit.”

Athanagoras, who lived soon after Justin, says, “ We call upon God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, showing their power in the unity and their distinction in order.” Elem. Ch. Theol. by Bp. of Lincoln, Vol. ii. p. 93.

“ So common was it among the early Christians to pay religious homage to Christ, that it was usual to distinguish them by this circumstance. Pliny, Governor of Bythnia, in a letter to the Emperor Trajan, says he had made inquiries concerning the Christians, and learned, ‘ that they were accustomed on a stated day to meet before daylight and to sing with one another a hymn to Christ as God.’ Eusebius, (Hist. Ecc. v. 25.) proving the opinion that Christ is a mere man to be a departure from the primitive faith, quotes a writer still more ancient as saying, ‘ Moreover, all the psalms and hymns of the Brethren, written from the beginning by the faithful, celebrate the praises of Christ, the Word of God, and attribute divinity to him.’”

† See Prof. Stuart’s Sermon, from Matt. 13—20.

we be directed to *trust* in him and *commit our souls to his keeping*, when there is an infinite and all-sufficient God to whom we may go?’

We shall leave the reader to judge whether the Scriptures *do* or *do not* “furnish one example, or once direct us to offer religious homage to Jesus.”

When we read the vision, and hear

“The whole creation join in one,
To bless the sacred name
Of Him who sits upon the throne,
And to adore the Lamb;”

“we may ask those who forbid us,” and who say we deny the Lord, “Is not this a being whom we are warranted, and bound to worship and adore? Must we confine our adoration, our sacred acts of religious homage, to ‘*Him that sitteth on the throne,*’ and exclude ‘*the Lamb*?’ Or if we may unite his name with that of the Father in our ascriptions of glory, and honor, and blessing, and power, what is the *kind*, and what the *measure* of homage which we are to consider ourselves as paying to him? Has a book, of which one of the leading designs is, to proscribe, and finally to abolish, all idolatry, represented the whole creation as uniting in one solemn act of adoration to God and to the Lamb; and by this very representation, called upon us, who are a part of the creation of God, to adore, and honor the Lamb, in the very same terms in which we adore and honor the Father; while at the same time it commands us to keep at an infinite distance from every approach to the worship of any creature, enjoining us to worship the Lord our God, and to serve him only?”*

Instead of finding no examples of prayer to Christ in the Scriptures, we find them very numerous and explicit. And we cannot avoid coming to the conclusion either that Christ is truly divine, inasmuch as he is so often represented as the object of worship; or that the sacred writers have, by the natural import of their language, led us to that which must be considered as idolatry.

Now add to all this, that the incommunicable attributes of divinity are ascribed to Christ, in the very same language in which they are ascribed to the Father, and that those works are performed by him, which none but God can perform, and that he both assumes, and receives those titles, which, under the same circumstances, it would be blasphemy to give to a mere man, or for a mere man to receive, and are we not compelled to receive him as ‘*GOD OVER ALL blessed forever, and to honor him even as we honor the Father*?’

But Mr. W. has the following very remarkable paragraph.

“Now is there any possible way in which you can overthrow these conclusions? You will attempt the work in but one manner. You can say that Jesus is possessed of two distinct natures; that he is ‘very God’ and ‘very man;’ that all my arguments refer to his human nature; and in that sense are perfectly sound; but that he

* See Wardlaw’s Reply, p. 232.

also possesses a nature truly divine; and is in truth directly the opposite of all that has been proved. This you can say, and may say, if you please. But this has not been said, either by Jesus himself, or by his apostles, or by any sacred writer. Not a word, not even a hint, can you find in the whole Bible, which intimates that Jesus possessed two distinct natures. Your saying, therefore, has no foundation in revelation; it is mere human assertion.

"But how would you attempt to prove the truth of this assertion? You would first prove, as I have done, that Jesus is a created, dependent being. Then you would say, his names, and attributes, and offices, and works, and words prove him to be 'very God.' Now apply this mode of reasoning to the ancient Prophets, and the inspired Apostles, . . . and you have precisely the same *kind* of evidence, and not greatly inferior in degree, to prove them truly divine, as you have to prove Jesus truly divine. You must do it, to be consistent in your reasoning; or you must admit that he had but one nature. You have your choice."

We make this long quotation, that the reader may see how Mr. W. anticipates, and endeavors to prepare the minds of his readers to reject, the doctrine of two natures in Christ. He seems to be aware, that all his arguments would be considered, as proving nothing more, than that he possessed a human nature. And no wonder he had such anticipations, for we are unable, after a repeated perusal, to find anything in the whole sermon to disprove the divinity of Christ, only that he was human, and therefore could not be divine—that he was *Son of God*, and therefore could not be God. But we all believe, that Christ was human—that he was the *anointed Son of God*—that he was *Messiah*, because we have abundant proof that he was so. But we have, to us, equally satisfactory proof, that he was *also divine*—*God* manifest in the flesh. And could Mr. W. suppose that he should convince any one, that Christ was not divine, by proving that he was human, which we all, in common, believe, and then *asserting* that he could have but *one* nature! We shall say nothing of the disrespectful, and rather petulant language used in the above quotation. But we ask if it proves anything? Instead of *asserting* that, our "*saying has no foundation in revelation, it is mere human assertion,*" would it not have been as *consistent* and *proper* for him to have noticed, *what we consider a foundation in revelation for the divine and human natures?* Why did he not tell us, in what sense he was *before* Abraham, and yet the *son* of Abraham; in what sense he was David's *Lord*, and yet David's *son*; in what sense he is the *root*, and yet the *offspring* of David? Why did he not tell us, what we are to understand, by Christ's being in the form of God, and yet not eagerly seeking to retain his equality with God, taking upon himself the form of a servant? What we are to understand by his once being *rich*, and becoming *poor*? What, by his prayer, "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory *which I had with thee before the world was?*" What, by the phrase, "the Word became flesh?" Why was ascribed to him, and how he actually displayed, all the divine attributes, while at the same time he manifested, with the exception of sin, all the appearances of a man? Why he is so often called God in an absolute sense, accom-

panied with attributes, and works which exclude the idea of any other, than the Creator, and Governor, and Judge of the world; and yet called a servant, the son of man? Every one must perceive, and if he will be candid, acknowledge, that there are two classes of texts, and each numerous, which represent Christ as human and as divine—the one as having all the properties that belong to man, and the other as having all the properties that belong to God. Would it not have been candid in a writer, to give a respectful notice of these considerations, rather than to say, “Not a *word*, not even a *hint* can you find in the whole Bible, which intimates that Jesus possessed two distinct natures”?

But after this, he offers two objections to Christ’s divine nature.

1. “The same argument which would prove it, would prove the divine nature of the Prophets and Apostles.” The whole sermon conveys the sentiment, that Christ was no more than the prophets and apostles. And is it true, that we have precisely the same kind of evidence, to prove them truly divine, as we have to prove Christ truly divine? Is there any thing like the following said in the Scriptures, ‘In the beginning were the prophets and apostles, and the prophets and apostles were with God, and the prophets and apostles were God? The prophets and apostles shall be called Immanuel, which being interpreted is, *God with us*? We (the apostles) are Alpha and Omega . . . which were, which are, and which are to come, *the Almighty*? We are the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person?’ Is it ever said of the apostles, ‘All things were made by them, and without them was not any thing made that was made. They were before all things, having neither beginning of days nor end of life?’ Could the apostles encourage their surviving brethren, by saying; ‘Lo, we are with you always, even to the end of the world,—wherever ye meet in our name, there will we be in the midst of you?’ Could they say, ‘We know the Father, even as we are known of him, and he that hath seen us, hath seen the Father?’ Could they pray, ‘O Father, glorify thou us, with the glory which we had with thee before the world was?’ Would it be proper to baptize ‘in the name of the Father, and of the prophets, and of the Holy Ghost?’ Are the prophets or apostles called the *root* and the *offspring* of David? Are they ever represented as the object of religious homage and praise in heaven? Has it ever been revealed that all the host of heaven bow down, and render ascriptions of honor, and majesty, and power, and glory, to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the prophets and apostles? Such questions might be multiplied almost indefinitely, but these will be sufficient to make us shrink from the idea of associating the prophets and the apostles with HIM, *by whom all things were made, and by whom all things consist*. But Christ is thus associated with the Father and is receiving with him the honor of all in heaven.

Mr. W.'s other objection to the doctrine of two natures in Christ is, that it makes Christ a deceiver. His argument is derived from the following text.

“Of that day, and that hour, knoweth no *man*, no, not the *angels* which are in heaven, neither the *Son* but the Father.’ If he was very God, he did know, for God must know all things. And if he did know, he uttered a deliberate falsehood; and intentionally deceived the disciples.”

But this, and the like passages, instead of disproving the doctrine of two natures in Christ, render this doctrine necessary, in order that these passages may be rendered consistent with the other class of numerous texts, which represent him as equal with the Father, and as knowing all things. There is no falsehood, on our ground, in Christ's saying, that the Father is greater than I, and that he did not know the day, &c. For there is a sense, in which, the Father was greater than he, and in which, he did not know the time alluded to. But taking Mr. W. on his own ground, the difficulty is still greater. For if he make Christ merely a man, and rank him with the apostles, we see not how he can exonerate him from the charge of deception. For, *as man*, he could not know the Father as the Father knew him—as man, he could not know all men—could not be a searcher of the hearts and a trier of the reins—could not be the *root* and offspring of David; and yet all these things and many more, he positively affirms of himself, which could not be true of him, if he were only a man. Moreover, Mr. W.'s position makes the other sacred writers deceivers, for they affirm that Christ *knew all things—that he made all things—that he is God*, which cannot be true, if he is a *mere man*. His own argument, in which he is so *very positive*, brings him into this dilemma. If he is determined to have but one nature in Christ, he may take either side, and say, Christ is not *divine*, because he said, he did not know the day, alluded to, and that the Father was greater than he; or he may say he was not *human*, because he said, and the sacred writers said of him, he *did* know all things, was equal with God, that he made all things, &c. “He must,” to use his own words, “do” *both* “to be consistent in his reasoning, or he must admit” two natures, which alone will harmonize both these classes of texts. “He has his choice.” If Christ be not truly and properly divine, no consistent explanation can be given of those numerous passages which represent him as possessing divine attributes. If he be not also man, none can be given of those which speak of his subordination to the Father, and of his assuming the form of a servant. But if both characters are allowed to be united in one complex person, all the passages harmonize with each other. If we are asked “whose son is he?” We can answer, the son of David. If we are further asked, “how then doth David in spirit call him *Lord*, saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call

him *Lord*, how is he his son?" We can answer, He is the *root* of David. He is Jehovah, who existed before David, to whom that monarch owed his elevation, and whom he acknowledged as his sovereign Lord.

Now, it is in place here to ask the question, which has often been asked, "Shall we admit one class of texts, and exclude the other? Because the Bible proves him to be man, shall we infer that he cannot also be God? Will you deny his divinity, because you cannot see how it can be so connected with human nature, as to constitute one complex person? With equal reason might you deny that Abraham had a soul, and that he had a body; for you find things said of him, which cannot be said of his body, and also which cannot be said of his soul. Abraham *believed God*; but his body did not believe, it was his soul. Abraham *died*; but his soul did not die, it was only his body. And yet we say of the same person, both that *he believed, and he died*. Hence we conclude, that Abraham was a complex person, consisting of body and soul, and that these were so connected as to form but one person. But we have no more conception how the body and soul of man are united, than we have how the *divine nature* is united to *human*, in the person of Christ. And to disbelieve this union, because we cannot see *how* it is formed, is just as unreasonable, as to disbelieve the union between the body and soul, because we cannot see how that is formed." Allowing then, as we think every candid reader of the Bible must, that there are many passages which represent Christ as being with the Father before the world was, as possessing divine attributes, and as the object of equal honors; and also that there are many other passages which represent him as man, as sent of the Father, and as inferior to him, What shall we do? I repeat the question, shall we admit one class and exclude the other? Or shall we weigh them in a balance, and take the one which preponderates? On this ground we should, I apprehend, be obliged to admit his divinity, and reject his humanity. But this will not answer for those, who receive the Bible as the inspired volume of God. "Since the facts of Scripture are to be received on the simple ground of divine testimony, and according to this testimony, Christ is truly man and truly God, we are bound to believe both these facts. Admit these, and the difficulty arising from the opposite classes of texts, that have been referred to,—a difficulty which has been a stumbling block to so many, is at once removed. Some things are said of Christ, which are true only of his human nature, and some things, which are true only of his divine nature. So that in truth we may say, that he was born in Bethlehem, and yet was without beginning of days; that he grew in body and mind, and yet is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; that he knew not the day of the destruction of Jerusalem, and yet knew all things;

that the Father was greater than he ; and yet that he was not chargeable with robbery in claiming equality with God. Had the Pharisees this view of Christ, they could have answered his question with ease and correctness, how the Messiah was both the *son* and the *Lord* of David. And without this view, we see not, how any satisfactory answer can ever be given to this question.”* Are any still inclined to ask, *How* this can be ? An answer has already been given, in the following words. “ *Facts* themselves are all that it concerns us to know. The *manner* in which things can be, is not important to us ; and is indeed unknown, even in respect to the most common phenomena of nature.† Facts we have now given you, on the authority of the divine word. If you ask, *How* Christ could be God and man ? We answer with Paul, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself ; God was manifest in the flesh*. Nor is what Paul asserts any more than John has told us, when he says, that *the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us*. The same apostle too has told us of assertions which the Saviour himself made, that amount to the same thing. *Whoever*, said Jesus to Philip, when he had asked to see the Father, *whoever hath seen me hath seen the Father*. And again, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me*. This is enough for the humble Christian, who receives the Scriptures as the word of God, and the only rule of his faith and practice.”‡ Any objection, therefore, that may be offered arising from its incomprehensibility, we shall not deem within our province to answer. For we believe that the *manner*, in which the natures human and divine are united, does not come within the limits of human investigation. “ The *fact* is all we need to know ; and the *fact* we ought as Christians to

* See Sermon from Matt. xxii. 42, by Rev. B. Emerson.

† Who can explain the connexion between the act of the will, and a motion of the hand ? Who can say how a seed, deposited in the ground, sprouts, rises to the light, blossoms, and brings forth a fruit fit for the service of man ? Who can tell why the soil of the same garden, warmed by the same sun, and moistened by the same showers, should produce the sugar of the cane, the acid of the lemon, and the deadly poison of the hemlock ? The whole volume of nature is full of such instances, in which the difficulty both in kind and degree is precisely the same, as in the doctrine under discussion. And shall an instance of this difficulty in the volume of revelation make us skeptics and unbelievers, when we cannot move a step in the volume of nature, without finding them before us, and behind us, on our right hand and on our left ? We believe the facts, notwithstanding the difficulty, in the one case, and why shall we not do the same in the other ? To reject them, would be a course equally unphilosophical and unreasonable. The facts in each case, are of no difficult comprehension, but the manner in which these facts can exist, consistently with each other, and the relations they sustain to each other, and to other objects, are alike impenetrable. It is important in this connexion to observe, that because we do not know *every* thing which belongs to a subject, it does not follow that the knowledge we have of it, is on that account, less certain or less valuable. What we do not know of a subject can never affect the certainty or importance of what we do know. What we do know of the doctrine of the Trinity, or of the two natures of Christ, can never be affected, as to its certainty or importance, by anything which we do not understand, any more than the certainty and value of the navigator’s skill in nautical science, can be affected by his ignorance of the construction of the sun which he uses in his observations, or of the chemical composition of the water by which he is supported. Though by searching we cannot find out God to perfection, yet this does not diminish the truth or importance of what he has plainly revealed to us concerning himself.

‡ Stuart’s Sermon, from Matt. xviii. 20.

believe, and we *must* believe, if we pay implicit deference to the authority of the Bible.”*

We are aware that a hundred questions may be asked on this, as on almost all other subjects, which our limited minds could not answer. But with us, who cannot “by searching find out God,” the question is *not*, whether the divinity *can* be veiled in humanity, or *how* the union is effected, but simply, what is the testimony of God in regard to the *fact*? The question can never be settled by measuring every passage by what one man may consider absurd, for another does not see the absurdity; or by *assuming* in our premises, or *asserting* in our conclusions, the main thing in dispute.

Were these considerations kept in mind, the limits of the controversy would be very much narrowed, and every humble inquirer would be able to settle it for himself, by a reference to the plain declarations of the Holy Scriptures. These declarations, we are fully persuaded, represent Christ as both *God and man*. Shall we receive their explicit testimony, without any glosses, or altering of translation, and admit that Jesus Christ is both divine and human? Or shall we admit his humanity and reject his divinity, (the many passages of Scripture to the contrary notwithstanding,) because our limited minds cannot comprehend the mysterious union between them?

An able writer says, “It argues both pride and ignorance for men to refuse to believe what God, who only knows himself, has been pleased to declare to us concerning his own nature, merely because our narrow minds cannot comprehend the full meaning of it. I desire humbly and contentedly to take God’s word, and to believe whatever he tells me to be true, though I am not able to conceive *every* thing about it.”

Adopting then the words of the sermon under review, we may say with emphasis, “The question is now put to your consciences. On this infinitely important subject, are you disposed to receive the *plain, current, unembarrassed doctrine of revelation*?” “Are you willing to believe that” *the Word was God*;—that *the Word became flesh and dwelt among men*;—that *God was manifest in the flesh*;—that *Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life,—over all, God blessed forever*?

“Will you make the holy Scriptures the standard of your faith and the rule of your conduct? And will you study them in connexion, and compare passage with passage, and exercise your common sense in their interpretation, so as to obtain their true meaning? Or will you form a system of belief, from detached verses, and obscure expressions, and human inferences, and party explanations? You have your choice.”

We will add, will you study the Scriptures with humility, and with constant prayer for the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit? Every one who is wise, will read with the deepest solicitude to

* Stuart’s Sermon, from Matt. xviii. 20.

know and obey the truth, for there is a vast personal responsibility, which infinitely outweighs all party considerations. The question in dispute is one which lays hold on eternity. It concerns the object of our religious worship, is essentially connected with all the other precious truths of the gospel, and with our hopes as immortal creatures. For, says Christ, *Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*

The examination of Mr. Whitman's sermon is now finished.* For much of the substance of the preceding pages, no claim is made to originality. On a subject which has been so often, and ably discussed, the writer's principal aim has been an *adaptation* of the arguments, which he has long regarded as valid, to the sermon under review. What I have written, I have not written in the spirit of controversy. Notwithstanding the provocations contained in the sermon, I have endeavored to avoid all disrespectful language, and reproachful epithets. And though he has accused the great majority of the Christian Church, in this and other lands, of denying Christ, and though it appears to me that the difference between the two systems is heaven-wide; yet, I will not pronounce the judgments of God. To his own Master he stands or falls. He is my fellow mortal, and we are to meet each other at another day at the bar of Him whose character is in question. It will then be decided, whether I am guilty of too highly exalting him, or he, of robbing him of his glory.

To all, into whose hands this pamphlet may fall, the writer would say,—you are called, by every consideration of duty and personal interest, to examine impartially, and prayerfully, the holy Scriptures. All your interests as immortal beings are involved in the question relative to the character, and worship, of the Saviour. The present excitement will soon be over, the passions of the day will soon subside, and our final destiny will soon be fixed by refer-

* Some readers will, doubtless, think that a review was altogether unnecessary. The writer himself, on first reading the sermon, thought the same, and only wished that it might be read and compared with the Scriptures, which he supposed would be sufficient to expose its sophistry, and its unfounded, though *very positive* assertions. It was, probably, with the same impression, that an early notice of the sermon, and extracts, were given in the Recorder & Telegraph. As it takes bolder and more exclusive ground, and has gone so much further in its spirit of denunciation, than heretofore good policy would permit, it was supposed that Unitarians themselves, in their fulness of charity, would hardly be prepared to join with the author in denouncing, without hesitation, all Trinitarians, (including the most pious and learned men of all countries and ages,) as either ignorant, or as wilful deniers of the Lord Jesus. But as Unitarians have commended the sermon in their public journals, and circulated it extensively among their people, the reviewer thought it proper to notice some of the arguments, which they have thus approved, and upon which, of course, they depend for the support of their system.

It is but a little while, since Unitarians, were very desirous to conceal all difference between the two systems of belief. Much was said about "christian righteousness;" or external morality, as the grand and sole object of all preaching, and the only evidence by which we are permitted to form our judgments of the characters of each other. It was then, no matter what a man believed, for "the exercise of christian charity was of more importance than all faith;" but now, in showing who will be denied by Christ before his Father in heaven, unless indeed they are pardoned on the ground of ignorance, Mr. W. says, they are those who *believe* "Christ is God, or that he is equal with God, or worship him as God." Such are now, whatever their characters in other respects, accused of 'joining with the blasphemous Jews in denying the Lord Jesus.' This sermon is, therefore, rather a new development of the spirit of Unitarianism, and as such, should be known.

ence to the sacred volume which is now, *plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.* With deep and solemn impressions, remember the inspired passage, "*Unto them which be disobedient, the STONE which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient.*"

Consider the question in debate, as too solemn and momentous in its bearings upon your own soul, to be hastily decided by private attachments or antipathies, by party spirit or prejudice, and with a mind open to receive whatever eternal wisdom shall communicate, repair to the infallible word of God, and *Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

NOTE.

REMARKS ON THE CORRECTNESS OF THE COMMON BIBLE.

"The truths of the gospel have always had their enemies. Those enemies at the present day are very numerous. The heart searching and soul humbling truths of the gospel are the unceasing object of attack. Every art is employed, every species of sophistry is resorted to, and every prejudice is taken advantage of, to drive those hated doctrines out of the world.

That the doctrines of grace are taught in our common Bible, if the language is to be understood according to its plainest and most obvious sense, cannot be denied. Hence, the enemies of those doctrines have employed and continue to employ, with the utmost industry, all their talents and learning, in endeavoring to explain away that obvious sense, and to make men believe it cannot be the true sense. Volumes of learned criticism have been written, rules of interpretation have been contrived, supposed analogies of faith have been traced out, and multitudes of metaphysical objections have been raised; and all to do away, by notes and comments, the plain, obvious meaning of scripture language. But all this labor fails of accomplishing its object. For, although many are bewildered and led away from the simplicity of the gospel, yet many also will still resort to the Bible for instruction, and will receive its plain obvious testimony, on the authority of God alone. They will sit down as learners at the feet of Jesus, and joyfully receive the word at his blessed mouth. They will believe God rather than man.

Finding it impossible to persuade those who have confidence in the Bible to reject the doctrines it teaches, the enemies of truth are now making use, I believe extensively, of another artifice. *They deny the correctness of the Bible itself.* They well know, that if they can succeed in destroying the confidence of the public at large in the correctness of the common Bible, the chief obstacle will be removed. If the old Bible, which teaches the hated doctrines, can be destroyed, and a new Bible can be introduced, which does not teach them, the object will be gained.

To destroy the public confidence in the common Bible, various representations are employed, some in regard to the correctness of the translation, and some in regard to the correctness of the original text from which the translation was made. And when these representations are made to those who have not the means of information on these points, they are often exceedingly well adapted to shake their confidence in both.

Now, such assertions are easily made; and it is extremely difficult for those who are not acquainted with the subject, to furnish a contradiction, or give any satisfactory explanation.

One thing at least is certain. Where all the manuscripts agree, and there is no various reading at all, that reading must be the true one. If, therefore, any man wishes to alter the text for the sake of getting rid of any of the doctrines of grace, it is incumbent on him to show, that, according to the best authority, from a comparison of all the manuscripts and ancient versions, *all* the texts which teach that doctrine ought to be excluded. If one text remains, which teaches that doctrine, the doctrine itself is supported, even if all but one should

be rejected. But this cannot be done; and the enemies of truth well know that it cannot be done. They cannot even produce one copy, whether more or less ancient, whether derived from a more or less credible source, from which *all* the texts which teach any one of the doctrines of grace are left out. For instance, the Socinians wish to prevent the Bible from teaching the divinity of Christ. But in order to do it, they ought to produce sufficient authority for rejecting from the original text *all* the passages which teach it. It would not be sufficient for them to produce authority for rejecting half of them, or nine-tenths of them, or even all but one. If one single text, of undisputed authority, like John, i. 1, should remain, it would sufficiently establish that doctrine. It is utterly in vain, then, for them to reject 1 John, v. 7, and to alter two or three other passages, and to produce some show of authority for so doing. Though, from a careful attention to all the evidence I have been able to find, on both sides, I am fully convinced that those passages are correct, as they stood in the original text from which our common Bible was translated. It would be utterly in vain, if they could prove that fifty passages which teach this doctrine ought to be rejected from the text, whilst more than two hundred would remain which teach the same doctrine.

A most careful and critical examination was made, a few years ago, of all the manuscripts and printed editions of the Hebrew Bible that could be found, by Kennicott and De Rossi. The former examined by himself and others about 700, and the latter about 500. Every variation was taken down, even in the mode of spelling the same words, or in pointing and accenting the same letters, or in the shape and size of the letters. The result of this immense labor has been a full conviction that there is no necessity for altering that printed text of the Hebrew Bibles from which our common Bible was translated. Some editions have been printed with a selection of the various readings in the margin, containing all that it was thought any one would deem important. Such a one I have possessed for sixteen years, and have been in the habit of examining by it those passages which teach the disputed doctrines. And I have never yet found a single proof text of any one of those doctrines at all affected by any of those variations, if their authority were admitted.

Macknight closes a very full account of the manner in which the received text of the Greek New Testament was settled, in the following words:

"From the manner in which the text of the Greek New Testament in common use, was ascertained, every attentive reader must be sensible, that the learned men who employed themselves in that important work used the greatest diligence, fidelity, and critical skill. And as they were many in number, and of different sentiments with respect to the controverted doctrines of christianity, no reading could be admitted from prejudice, or any particular bias, but every thing was determined agreeably to the authority of the greatest number of the most ancient and best manuscripts."

It is worthy of note, that Macknight says this in the year 1795, which was twenty years after Griesbach's Testament was first published; whose alteration he is therefore by no means disposed to admit.

But if all Griesbach's alterations had been admitted, and all other alterations should be made in the original text which any learned man would venture to say were supported by any authority worthy of credit, what would be the consequence? The evidence of no fact would be destroyed, no duty would be altered, no doctrine would be shaken. There are passages enough, in which all the copies of the original agree, passages enough which cannot be disputed by any, which inculcate the same duties, and which teach the same doctrines, as those do which are disputed. The enemies of truth are well aware of this; and therefore their last resort is, to find fault with the translation, and propose "Improved Versions."

Some new translations have been made by men of learning and talents, men of competent skill in the Greek language, but men whose enmity to the truth has appeared at every step. They have done what they could, in order to make the scriptures speak a different sense from that which appears in our common Bible. But after all they have done, they have not been satisfied with their own labors in this way; and finding that the words they were obliged to use, if understood in their plain obvious sense, would still teach the hated doctrines, they have added notes and comments, to contradict them or explain them away. I have heard of other translations, made by men notoriously incompetent, whose only knowledge of the Greek language was acquired, according to their own account, in a few months. These, for aught I know, if their authors were only bold and daring enough, and sufficiently regardless of their reputation, may have been so made as to leave out the doctrines of the gospel entirely. When a translator takes such liberties with the sacred text, he can reduce it to almost any shape he pleases. But this is as much as we can expect, when a man goes about the work of translation, with his mind made up, as Priestley's was when he said "that it is better to suppose the evangelists did not rightly recollect what our Lord said to them, than to suppose he claimed any existence before he was born of Mary." When such men undertake a translation of the Bible, we have no reason to be surprised if they do violence to the sacred text, rather than suffer it to teach a doctrine they dislike.

With regard to the dependence which those who know none but the English language can place upon our common Bible, I would observe a few things. I believe they may safely place entire dependence upon it, as the pure word of God. And I will give some of the reasons why I believe so. It is now more than eighteen years since I commenced the study of the Greek language; and during that time, there have been but few intervals in which I have not been in the habit of reading it more or less almost every day. And though I do not deem myself by any means master of the language, yet it must appear probable that the Greek Testament is tolerably familiar to me. And from all that I have been able to learn about it

during that time, I see no need of any new translation. There are places, indeed, in which I obtain some additional ideas from reading the original, but none in which those ideas are essentially different. I believe the translation contained in our common bible is a far better one, and much more conformable to the meaning of the original, than any that have been intended to supplant it, or than any that would be likely to be made at this day. I have also the translation in the German language, in the Low Dutch, and in the French, and two different Latin versions, all made from the original, independently of each other; all of which I consult occasionally, but have never yet discovered any essential difference among any of them.

But a fact of much more importance, and one that is well known, is, that the Bible Societies throughout the world choose our common Bible as the only copy to be circulated in the English language. This fact alone should be sufficient to satisfy every doubt as to its correctness. The Bible Society is confined to no sect or denomination. It has belonging to it the most pious and learned men of the age—the very men who are the best judges of its accuracy—the very men to whom we must look for a new translation, if one were to be made. These men are every day giving us the most decided testimony that no new one is necessary, by using all their efforts to circulate the old throughout the world, wherever the English language is known, and that too, “without note or comment.”

There is one other consideration. The common translation was made under circumstances more favorable to its accuracy than any other translation has been made since, circumstances that forbid the supposition that any considerable defects can exist in it. The following extracts are undisputed and authentic history:

“Fifty-four learned men were appointed to this office by the King. (James.) as appears by his letter to the archbishop, dated 1604; which being three years before the translation was entered upon, it is probable seven of them were either dead, or had declined the task; since Fuller’s list of the translators makes but forty-seven, who being ranged under six divisions entered upon their province in 1607.”

The following were some of the instructions given them:

“Every member of each division to take the chapters assigned for the whole company; and after having gone through the version and corrections, all the division were to meet, examine their respective performances, and come to a resolution which parts of them should stand.

“When any division had finished a book in this manner, they were to transmit it to the rest to be further considered.

“If any of the respective divisions shall doubt or dissent on the review of the book transmitted, they were to mark the places, and send back the reasons of their disagreement: If they happen to differ about the amendments, the dispute was to be referred to a general committee, consisting of the best distinguished persons drawn out of each division.

“When any place is remarkably obscure, letters were to be directed by authority to the most learned persons in the universities, or country, for their judgment upon the text.

“Three or four of the most eminent divines in each of the universities, though not of the number of the translators, were to be assigned by the vice chancellor, to consult with other heads of houses for reviewing the whole translation.”

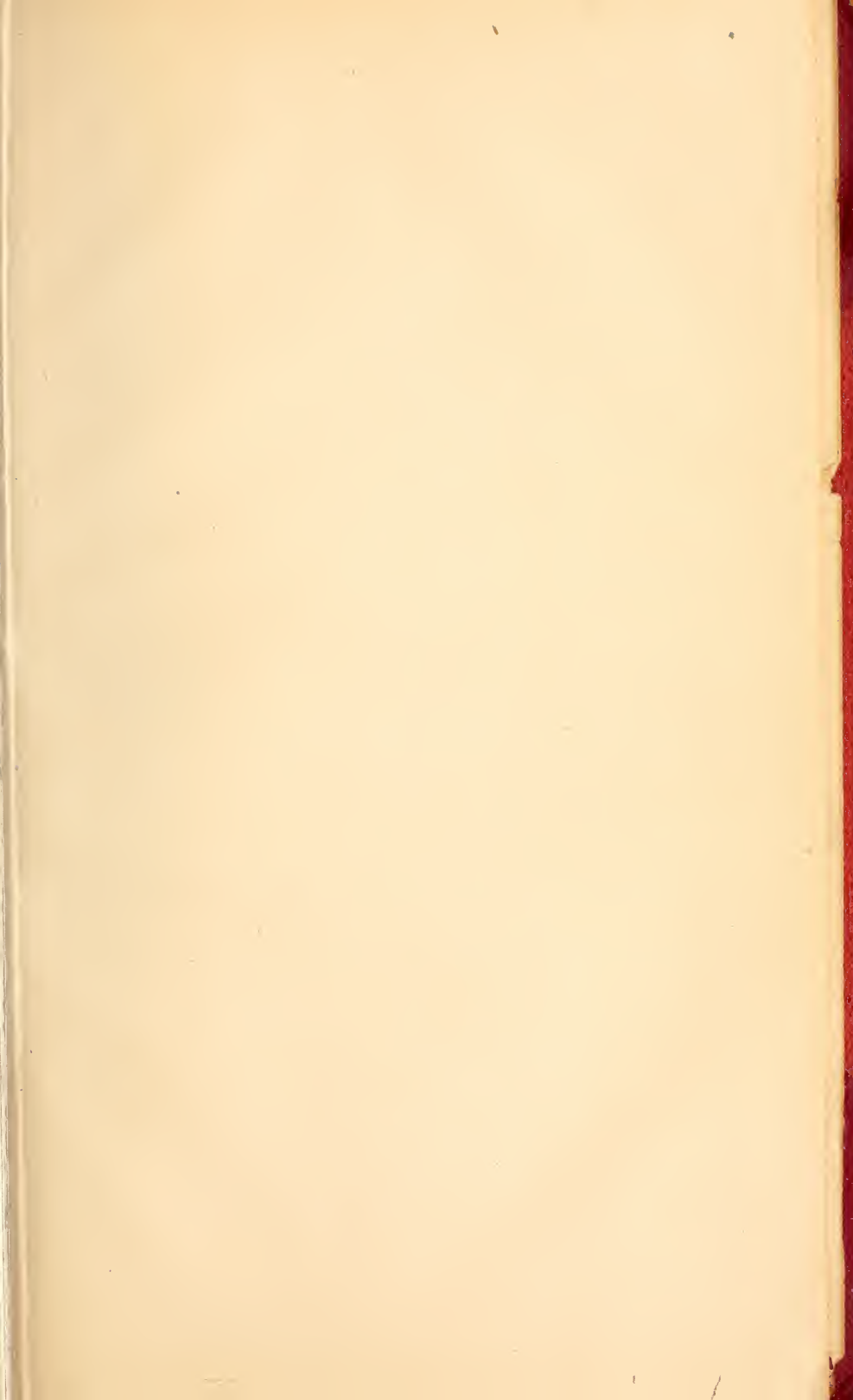
Of the manner in which each company proceeded in examining the translation made by each member, we have an account in the following extract:

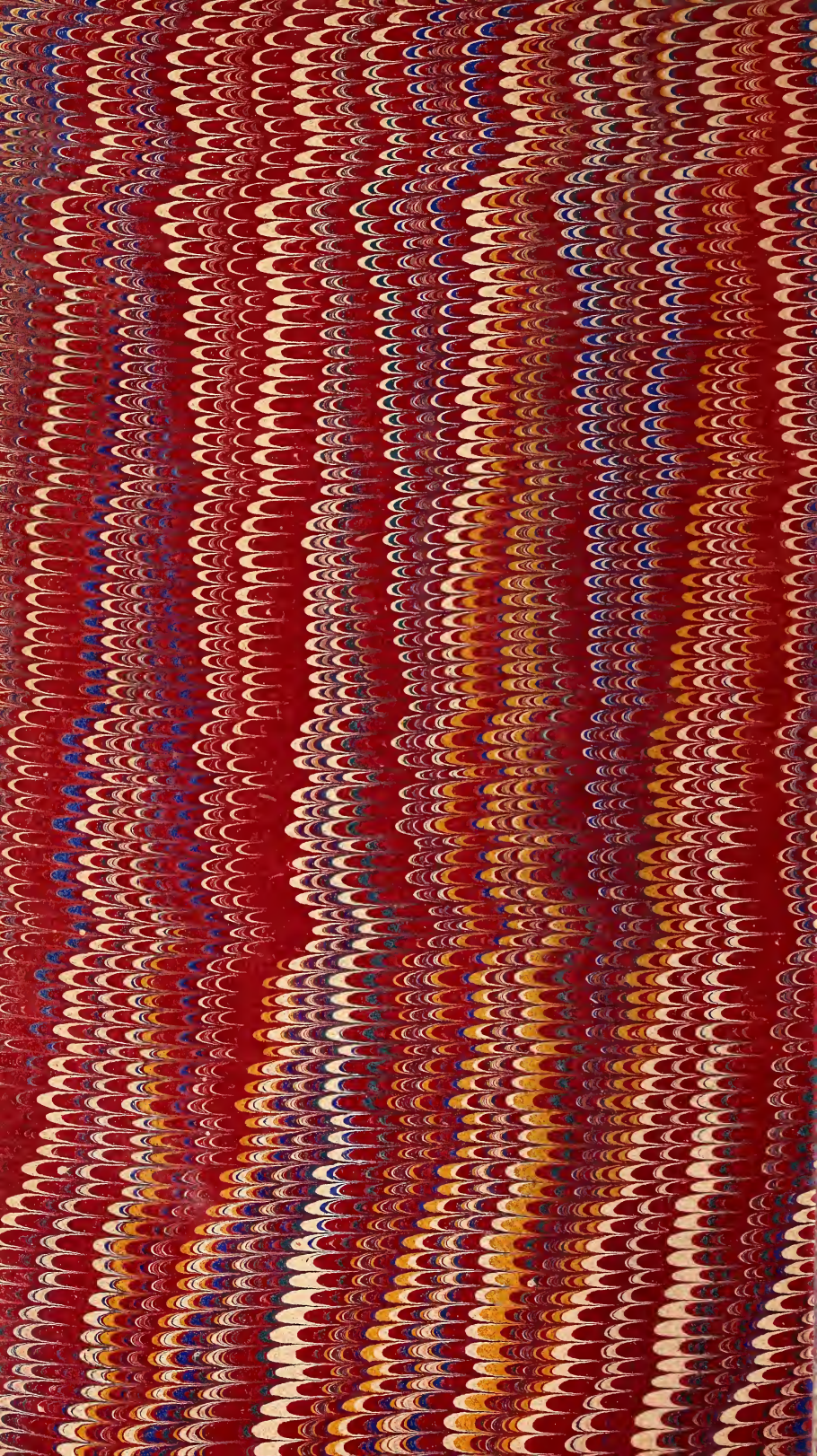
“The judicious Selden, speaking of the Bible, says, “The English translation of the Bible is the best translation in the world, and renders the sense of the original best. The translators in King James’ time took an excellent way. That part of the Bible was given to him who was most excellent in such a tongue, and then they met together, and one read the translation, the rest holding in their hands some Bible, either of the learned tongues, or French, Spanish, Italian, &c. If they found any fault, they spoke; if not, he read on.”

“Almost three years, it seems, was spent in this service. At the end thereof, the whole work being finished, and three copies of the whole Bible being sent to London, one from Cambridge, a second from Oxford, and a third from Westminster, a new choice was to be made of two out of each company, to review the whole work and polish it, and extract one out of all the three copies, to be committed to the press. In three quarters of a year they fulfilled their task. Last of all Dr. Andrews, Dr. Bilson, and Dr. Myles Smith, again reviewed the whole work, and prefixed arguments to the several books.”

From the above extracts, it appears to me abundantly evident that a translation made with so much care is not likely to be essentially defective; and that we have every reason to confide in the judgment and honesty of those pious and learned members of the Bible Societies, who circulate it without note or comment, and recommend it to all classes as the pure word of God.

On the whole, therefore, I cannot but think the course taken by the Unitarians in Germany is the least laborious to themselves, as well as the most open and magnanimous. It is that of admitting that the writers of the Bible did believe and teach the doctrines of grace; and then seeking to get rid of their authority *by denying their inspiration*. Would all the enemies of truth take this course, the controversy between them and its friends would be reduced to a very small compass; and those who should be disposed to have any Bible would be left in the undisturbed enjoyment of the one they now possess.”—*Christian Repository*.







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